BEST OF 2017

OC WEEKLY

FREE

OC Weekly's best shops, restaurants, bars, politicians, theaters, dispensaries and more…

…and, of course, some of the heckin' best doggos available for adoption in Orange County!

DIAMOND
Available from
BARKS OF LOVE

Best in Show!

ENGAGING ART
OUTSTANDING ENTERTAINMENT!

MOMIX - *Opus Cactus*
Nov 18 '17 at 8pm

With his thrillingly talented company of dancer-illusionists, Artistic Director Moses Pendleton conjures a fantasy world of visual splendor using props, light, shadow, humor and the human body

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo
Jan 20 '18 at 8pm
Jan 21 '18 at 2pm

The "ballerinas" of this all-male company bring hilarity and awe with a unique combination of ballet, parodies and physical comedy—along with pieces that show off the performers' impressive dance abilities.

NY Gilbert & Sullivan
Pirates of Penzance
Mar 10 '18 at 8pm

Set sail with this classic Gilbert and Sullivan comedy that boasts one of the most famous patter songs in musical theatre history—"Major-General's Song!"

The Doo Wop Project
Nov 12 '17 at 2pm

Stars of Broadway hits *Jersey Boys* and *Motown: The Musical*!

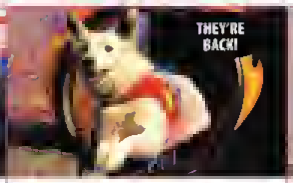
Hansel and Gretel
A WICKEDLY DELICIOUS MUSICAL TREAT!

Nov 25 '17 at 1pm & 4pm

Fun for the whole family!

Capitol Steps
Orange is the New Barack
Jan 13 '18 at 2pm & 8pm

A zillion fresh zingers of musical parodies that skewer both sides of the aisle!



Chris Perondi's
Stunt Dog Experience
Mar 18 '18 at 1pm & 5pm

With star performances on *Ellen*, *Oprah* and Animal Planet's *Pet Stars*, these canine daredevils are the most talented former rescue dogs in the world!

Danú
St. Patrick's Day Celebration
Mar 15 '18 at 8pm

Danú is one of today's leading traditional Irish ensembles, taking you on a musical journey to their native Ireland, offering a moving and memorable concert experience.

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Programming subject to change

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OCTOBER 28

11am DEDICATION

with festive marching band, followed by music and dance performances through the evening! Plus, fun activities for the entire family, including face painting, trick-or-treating and puppet shows.

FREE!

Welcome to our Grand Opening!

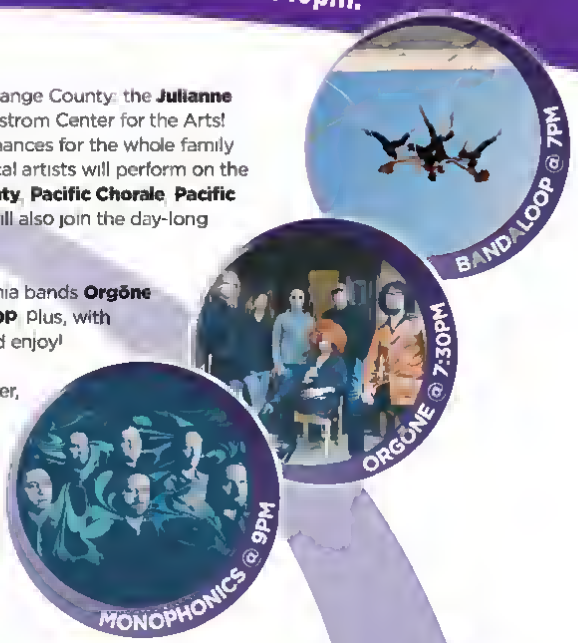
Julianne and George Argyros Plaza • Center for Dance and Innovation

Next Saturday, October 28 • Starts at 11am. Festivities until 10pm.

All are welcome to the Grand Opening of the newest gathering place in Orange County: the **Julianne and George Argyros Plaza** and **Center for Dance and Innovation** at Segerstrom Center for the Arts! The opening day will include a full schedule of **FREE** activities and performances for the whole family. Trick-or-treating and puppet shows will delight children of all ages, and local artists will perform on the new permanent outdoor stage. The **Philharmonic Society of Orange County**, **Pacific Chorale**, **Pacific Symphony**, **South Coast Repertory** and **Orange County Museum of Art** will also join the day-long festivities.

The celebration continues after dark with live performances by the California bands **Orgõne** and **Monophonics** as well as the gravity-defying dance troupe **BANDALOOP**. Plus, with shaded seating, free WiFi, and a lively café, there is so much to explore and enjoy!

Stop by the Information Table, located at the entrance of Segerstrom Center, when you arrive for a full schedule of the day's events!



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BRAND STORY

SHOWGROW

SANTA ANA

BY VICTORIA NGUYEN

In 1996, California became the first state to legalize the use of medical marijuana; we've come quite a long way since then. Presently, the state is on the brink of cannabis legalization for adult recreational use and, as a result, the industry is rapidly progressing in numerous directions with not an end in sight for the tens of thousands of businesses in California alone. ShowGrow finds itself at the epicenter of it all, continually revered in the industry as being the model brand.

Strolling through their beautiful 3800 sq ft location in Santa Ana, a bag of sour cream and onion flavored weed potato chips in one hand, an ice cold THC infused pink lemonade in the other, while simultaneously eyeing weed lollipops on a shelf next to peach rings and strawberry belts - I couldn't help but wonder whether there is a method to the madness or if it's just simply madness! Michael Anthony, Head of Marketing & Design at ShowGrow ensured me, "both!"

M: "Whether we're their first dispensary or their tenth, patients are quite often inundated with their first shopping experience inside of a ShowGrow. At any point in time we may have over a thousand products and eighty or more cannabis strains on display! But we pride ourselves on having an extremely knowledgeable staff who can relate with customers at all levels of experience."

V: "With such a wide variety of products in your stores, where does someone like me even start?"

M: "Well, that's actually our job! We practice a patient-first model of business so who you are, what you enjoy doing, & how you'd like cannabis to positively affect your life are all questions that are really important to us. We're genuinely interested but also knowing those answers help to really make our jobs easier. It's quite a blessing to have one of the largest offerings of product because it's helped tremendously to really hone our customer service skills & essentially become black belts at finding the right products for someone's life." He adds with a smile, "having a 100% satisfaction guarantee on our products also helps!"

V: "Patient first, I like that, makes me feel quite valued."

M: "Well of course!!! Our aim is two-fold, not only to provide our patients with a great experience, but also to educate them about the vast ways to medicate: how to judge the correct dosage, which strains induce certain feelings, etc. Education and awareness is the single most important thing to having a life long positive experience with cannabis and the more happy people there are in the world, well, the happier we are. That's super cheesy isn't it?"

V: "Totally but I love it. It seems to me that there are thousands of dispensaries around us and more seem to pop up every single day, what sets ShowGrow apart?"

M: "Well, that's an entirely different interview in itself but regardless, it's our normal daily life. To be fair, we've dispensed cannabis in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, & Vegas so ShowGrow is far from just another shop but we're here just trying to kick butt and stay authentic. I think that's what gravitates people towards the ShowGrow brand. We have a CEO that truly cares about authenticity in every step of the way. We're really in the streets with a food truck feeding homeless encampments in skid row, we really went and bought every single item on the Women Shelter's wish list and dropped it all off to them as a surprise, we really do host free public seminars about the positive health effects of THC & CBD, and I'm hating the shameless plug I'm about to make but you can even follow us on Facebook to get involved. We participated in the Race for Cure at 6am last Sunday in Newport and are frequently out on the beach doing clean up days. Almost all of our community volunteering efforts are public and everyone's welcomed! The more the merrier."

V: "I hear your parties are amazing, I'm invited to the next one right? I mean... you did say patient-first!"

M: "YES! Absolutely! You'll love our events. Free food, breakdancers, live muralists, DJ's... we had Red Bull come and host a CBD cocktail bar, free for everyone at one of the last events and Harry Mack freestyled while everyone trimmed their own cannabis buds from the plants that we brought in. It's a crazy sight. We'll be throwing one soon for the opening of our first Long Beach shop and actually, we have a great event at this shop for Halloween! We're doing 40% off as a thank you to everyone for helping us win Best Dispensary again this year!"

Visit ShowGrow at one of their many locations! Aside from their Las Vegas store, you will indeed need a medical marijuana recommendation from your physician in order to purchase product. The Santa Ana location offers Orange County's only 8 Gram 8th first time patient special. Find more info on their website or download their app on the app store!

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BEST OF 2017

Best in Show!

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WAGS Pet Adoption
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barksoflove.org
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German Shepherd Rescue of OC
gsroc.org
The Lovejoy Foundation
lovejoyfoundation.org

To find a shelter or rescue near you, visit the OCSPCA at www.orangecountyspca.org/shelters

OCWEEKLY.

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BEST OF 2017

Best in Show!

As the wise sage Milhouse Van Houten once said, "Dogs are outstanding!" But you know what's better? Rescue dogs And you know what's even better? The organizations that save these dogs from death and try to find them forever homes. It's hard, selfless, costly work—but it's the work of winners, for winners, by winners

And that's why this year, your favorite infernal rag decided to team up with some of the best dog-rescue groups around to use their pals as models for our annual Best Of issue. Who better than pound pups to show the rest of us how to live the good life in Orange County? And since we took great pictures of them, it's inevitable your eyes will also fall on the hundreds of winners we picked this year representing the best and brightest OC has to offer—more eye-grabbing than hot chicks in bikinis, you know? More important, if you're motivated to visit our winners, why not feel the urge to adopt our models and some of their pals as your own fur babies?

While some of these pooches will have already been adopted by the time you read this, others will be waiting for you After seeing them in various stages of play (except for Rasta Dog, no edibles were used in her—or any—photo shoot because she was already naturally chill!), you'd be a stone-hearted fool to not want one. Read this issue, then find all the info for the participating rescue societies and give them a call What else do you need? You've got rescue dogs and OC's best everything—GO GO GO and ADOPT ADOPT ADOPT!

—GUSTAVO ARELLANO

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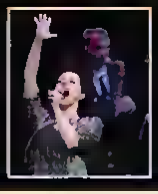
End of the RAINBOW



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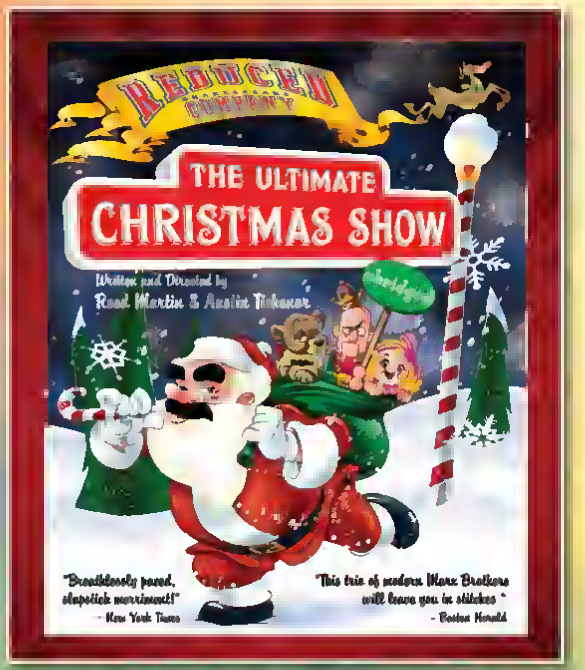
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THE RANCH AT LAGUNA BEACH

One of the biggest detriments to playing golf, besides cost, is the length of play. Rounds at heavily impacted courses—such as the ones most of us can afford—can take four hours, and if you're stuck behind some slow fuckers, it can stretch way longer. Add time driving to the course, warming up and getting pickled in the ninth hole, and half a day is gone. So why not cut it in half? Instead of playing 18 holes, stick with nine. You can do that at many courses, playing nine holes at a reduced rate, or you can take advantage of one of OC's last stand-alone nine-hole courses (which opened in 1950 and was called Aliso Creek Inn and Golf Course for years). The longest hole is 318 yards, so you won't need your driver—or the extra time searching for errant balls. But it will test your iron and short games, and located in Wood and Aliso canyons, it offers killer views and elevation changes. Green fees top out at $44 on weekend mornings, and you can play for as low as $25 during the week.

31006 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (800) 223-3309, www.theranchlb.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE DOGS AT LAGUNA BEACH

BEST DOG PARK

SEA TERRACE PARK

Ideal for curmudgeonly dogs and/or owners, this double dog compound has no amenities except poop bags. It's two side-by-side fenced-in runs, so you can isolate your lunatic canine if you need to. One of the pens is so long you can use a ball-throwing device. Once your animal has run off its manic energy, take a long stroll in the grassy park or through the tunnel and down onto Salt Creek Bluff for a rest. Parking is a problem only in summer or if the surf is up. Socializing is always possible once owners come to an agreement on safety, but if you are looking to do some human hooking up or gold-digging, go to the Laguna Beach Dog Park.

33501 Niguel Rd., Dana Point.

BEST BOOT CAMP

SO CAL BOOT CAMP

The fat-burning know-how here is scientifically based and will have you eating up calories long after the sweat from your class has been washed off. Offering a free first class and ocean views from both the Dana Point and San Clemente locations, your fitness goals will get all the help you need—and none of it from a drill sergeant screaming in your face. (Unless you ask for that from your personal trainer, of course, but don't let that be your first question.) Get cardio and metabolically healthy, strong and kinda badass.

32932 Pacific Coast Hwy., Dana Point, (949) 276-7650; also at 1030 Calle Sombra, San Clemente, (949) 218-2267, socalbc.com.

READERS' CHOICE: AXIOMS FITNESS

BEST PLACE TO PLAY POOL

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OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

Sports & Recreation

Congratulations to the winners of the Best Of Readers' Poll

The following winners have been voted the best in the Sports & Recreation category.

Best Angels Player
MIKE TROUT
www.mlb.com/angels

Best Beach
LAGUNA BEACH
visitlagunabeach.com

Best Boot Camp
AXIOMS FITNESS
877 663 5955
5628 E La Palma Ave, Anaheim
axiomsfitness.com

Best Bowling
CONCOURSE ANAHEIM
714 666 2695
3364 E La Palma Ave, Anaheim
concoursebowling.com

Best Casino
MORONGO CASINO RESORT & SPA
800 252 4499
49500 Seminole Dr, Cabazon
morongocasinoresort.com

Best Day Trip
SANTA CATALINA ISLAND
catalinachamber.com

Best Ducks Player
RYAN KESLER
nhl.com/ducks

Best Golf Course
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ocparks.com/parks/peters

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ocparks.com/parks/irvine

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Sports & Recreation

able and approachable staff, a kickback atmosphere, and affordable prices—but don't forget the pool, especially on Free Pool Mondays.

303 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (657) 266-0699, missionbarsa.com

READERS' CHOICE: DARBY B'S BILLIARDS & SPORTS BAR

BEST BEACH

T-STREET BEACH

There's no shortage of gorgeous beaches in Orange County, but the biggest problem with many of them is the crowd. Then you have San Clemente's T-Street Beach, less packed than its Huntington and Newport counterparts, with visitors far less bro-y (though you may have to watch out for sharks). Sure, it doesn't have the same level of restaurants, bars and shops that surround some of the more popular spots, but we'll take the serenity of actually being able to spread out on the sand (most of the time) over that any day.

335 W. Paseo De Cristobal, San Clemente (949) 361-8215; san-clemente.org

READERS' CHOICE: LAGUNA BEACH

BEST GYM

ORANGETHEORY FITNESS

Depending on who you ask, strength training and cardio are head-to-head for the preferred way to lose weight. The good thing about Orangetheory Fitness is that every workout incorporates both. A heart-rate monitor tracks your calories, and personalized data is emailed to you afterward. Memberships can travel, meaning folks have little excuse when there's a location in the vicinity. Orangetheory realizes that your energy varies (hangover, anyone?), offering alternatives to adjust movements and intensity and still get a solid workout. Win-win!

www.orangetheoryfitness.com

READERS' CHOICE: CRO KICKBOXING

BEST RIDE AT DISNEYLAND

SPACE MOUNTAIN

Perennial favorite Space Mountain thrills with its combination of perceived speed and danger as you zoom through the dark, unsure of your location or exactly where those support beams are. Just how close are your hands from being removed from your body? Only few know (there is video of the ride on YouTube with the lights on right before it goes into unplanned maintenance, and it doesn't put your mind any more at ease)

1313 Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, disneyland.com

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

PEPPERTREE PARK

Take the tablets out of your kids' hands, and watch them improve their muscle strength, coordination and cognitive-reasoning skills. This Cypress green-space boasts three slides, a rope ladder and semifunctional chimes. Tucked into a neighborhood off Knott Avenue, you barely hear the sounds of traffic through the fence. There's no bathroom, and weirdos are a rare sight. There are plenty of grassy fields for frolicking, if you're into that. And if you're not, there's also a full-size basketball court, with a bench in the far corner for spectators and the socially awkward.

11666 Luau Lane, Cypress

READERS' CHOICE: IRVINE REGIONAL PARK

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Laguna Hills, CA 92653

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Sports & Recreation

BEST YOGA

BE THE CHANGE YOGA

We all know most yoga studios in OC are for those who can easily achieve the "wallet stretch" pose. But who would've guessed the most accessible and awesome yoga classes are in the middle of master-planned Irvine? Be the Change Yoga is all that its name implies, offering everything from beginner to advanced classes with gentle and therapeutic options in between. There's no rigid fee structure here, either. Be the Change displays true flexibility with a donation-based system. And the studio's name isn't all talk. It's linking up with UC Irvine and Kaiser Permanente to promote the benefits of therapeutic yoga, and instructors deliver weekly bilingual classes to underserved residents at the Melissa Hoag Smith Center for Healthy Living in Newport Beach.

3843 Portola Pkwy., Irvine, (714) 417-9834
bethechangeyoga.com

READERS' CHOICE: SPECTRA YOGA

BEST LOCAL SURFER

KANOA IGARASHI

The Huntington Beach native was the youngest surfer to win the U.S. National Championships for under-18s (at 14) and the youngest rookie in the World Surf League's Men's Championship Tour in 2016. This year, he won the Vans U.S. Open of Surfing, receiving a hometown hero's welcome for winning in the waves he has surfed since he was 3 and for being the first American to win the title since HB's Brett Simpson did it in 2010. Did we mention Igarashi's only 19?

Instagram: @kigarashi

READERS' CHOICE: KANOA IGARASHI

BEST MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO

TEAM OYAMA

Although Colin Oyama made a name for himself training some of the biggest names in mixed martial arts—including Quintno "Rampage" Jackson and Ian "Uncle Creepy" McCall—his Irvine dojo reinvented itself over the past year or so to focus more on both young prospects and everyday members. Rather than putting an emphasis on the champions and former champions that still train at Team Oyama, the academy stands by a strict policy of treating everyone as equals. That mentality has created a vigorous rebirth among not only Oyama's pro fighters, but also the amateur and casual classes offered every day.

16632 Hale Ave., Irvine (949) 250-3117
www.teamoyama.com

READERS' CHOICE: WEST COAST TAEKWONDO

BEST FREEWAY

SS SOUTH

As Orange County has grown and our freeways turn into a perpetual SigAlert, the southbound 55 freeway miraculously remains relatively traffic-free from its birthplace in Anaheim Hills to just around Fair Drive (once you hit the end, of course, good luck). It's nothing at all like its 55 North sister, which is only light on traffic after last call nowadays. Be more like the South, for once!

BEST BATTING CAGES

HOME RUN PARK

Since 1961, aspiring big-leaguers have trekked to Home Run Park's 20 cages to hit what's dispensed via everything from slow-pitch machines (even a Challenger kid can hit one) to 90 mph lasers that forged generations of future pros. Even better, prices remain ridiculously affordable—a buck gets you 10 pitches, and you can get an hour for $36 to see how terribly your hand-eye coordination has deteriorated since you got the winning hit-by-pitch in the La Palma Senior Majors Little League championship.

711 S. Beach Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 229-8850
homerunpark.com

BEST CASINO

THE GARDENS CASINO

In recent years, the Gardens Casino in Hawaiian Gardens has evolved from a dirty circus tent full of degenerate gamblers to a polished, Vegas-style casino full of "interesting" gamblers. From the remodeled casino floor to the upscale restaurant and clean tables and chairs (gotta appreciate the little things, too,

folks), this 24-hour spot is a solid bet if you're trying to gamble somewhere relatively close to home. Though the OC-adjacent city of Hawaiian Gardens may seem a bit out of the way, this is the place where savvy players and salty locals come to relax and enjoy decently priced drinks, a revamped menu of culinary fusion, or a kickass Sunday brunch (make sure to go for the lobster in any of its many forms). The tables are spaced out, so there's no issue with having other players crowded on top of you, unless of course you're on a roll and attracting a lot of attention. You're in luck at this casino whether or not you're a winner.

11871 E. Carson St., Hawaiian Gardens, (562) 860-5887, www.thegardenscasino.com

READERS' CHOICE: MORONGO CASINO RESORT & SPA

BEST NATURE TRAIL

HARDING FALLS TRAIL

You can stop anywhere along the nearly 4-mile trail from Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary to Harding Falls and find yourself in a lovely canyon setting. About halfway up, at the base of the canyon, crystal-clear pools of cool water await. But this is one of those ultimately strenuous trails that only rewards those who push themselves the farthest—in distance, body fatigue and potential danger. After hopping boulders, navigating rough terrain and avoiding poison oak, a hiker finally cashes in on the sight of the majestic Harding Falls. Make sure to save something in the tank for the trek back, as it takes about three hours to reach the falls, and while that hike is easier, it can still kick your butt. Enter opposite the Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary, off Modjeska Canyon Road in Silverado.

READERS' CHOICE: PETERS CANYON

BEST ROAD TRIP

ALBUQUERQUE

It's only a 12-hour drive (11, really, if you gun it, but don't forget you jump ahead an hour), and then you're at the launch pad to investigate the rest of the Land of Enchantment. Spend a couple of days going through ABQ's vibrant craft-beer (but don't get a DUI—New Mexico has some of the harshest drunk-driving laws in the United States), awesome food and spectacular flea market scenes, then go travel the rest of New Mexico the holiness of Chimayó, the food in Santa Fe, the green chile in Hatch, turquoise in Madrid, aliens in Roswell, Carlsbad caves, and so much more. And, yes, *Breaking Bad* fans, there are tours galore, with the best one being the one in an RV the type Walter and Jesse used to cook their blue magic.

READERS' CHOICE: LAS VEGAS

BEST BOWLING

BOWLMOR ORANGE COUNTY

When you first walk in, family in tow for an afternoon outing, there's a nervous moment. With the red-and-black décor and blaring music, the prices have to be inflated and the food geared toward bored hipsters, right? But then a friendly staff member welcomes you and asks if you have a Groupon or maybe a Facebook discount? And the lanes are bright and clean, outfitted with comfortable lounge areas. The servers are quick and well-versed in what might appease your picky kids. There's a sports bar with the requisite flat-screen TVs and an interactive arcade, but you've come to bowl. So grab some two-toned shoes, choose a candy-colored ball, type in your favorite alias, and show your kids how you kick ass.

2405 Park Ave., Tustin, (714) 258-2695, www.bowlmgr.com.

READERS' CHOICE: COUCOURSE BOWLING

BEST PUBLIC POOL

BREA PLUNGE

A Spanish Revival building surrounds the 25-meter pool, beloved by generations of Breans. It's only open during the summer (although available for rental) and just two hours during weekdays (these hours Saturday and Sunday)—but for just two bucks, you can imagine you're in a scene from *The Sandlot*.

440 S. Walnut Ave., Brea, (714) 529-6233

BEST OF 2017

Sports & Recreation

BEST PLACE FOR DANCE LESSONS

ATOMIC BALLROOM

Dance trends and songs come and go, but Atomic Ballroom teaches them all, from the lindy hop to bachata to whatever the hell you do to writhe to "Despacito." Whether you do it as a group activity or with a private instructor to prepare to sweep the *chonis* off someone, you'll learn the proper steps and self-confidence to make Fred Astaire look like the Nutty Professor.

17961 Sky Park Circle Ste C, Irvine, (949) 250-3332; atomicballroom.com.

READERS' CHOICE: CLAUDIA DE LA CRUZ FLAMENCO INSTITUTE

BEST SURFING SPOT

THE WEDGE

Huntington Beach and Trestles get all the worldwide love, but ask those looking for a truly gnarly experience, and they'll point to the Wedge. The size and consistency of the waves are unlike those anyplace else in the area, and the relatively pristine waters of Newport Beach are the kind that keep surf-seeking tourists coming. The Wedge isn't for beginners—even groms who consider themselves experienced can get eaten alive—but it's a place where real surfers can spend a morning without worrying about too many bros just wanting to sit on their boards and (maybe) catch a single wave over the course of the day. Of course, the scariest thing for anyone is just getting there and finding a decent place to park.

READERS' CHOICE: HUNTINGTON BEACH

BEST ANGELS PLAYER

ANDRELTON SIMMONS

Anyone who doesn't realize Mike Trout is not only the best Halo player, but also the best baseball player on the face of the planet doesn't know much about baseball. Since that's a given, let's find the best Angels Player Not Named Mike Trout. And that would be shortstop Andrelton Simmons, whom the Angels traded for after the 2015 season. Through mid-August, Simmons led the team (remember, Trout missed about a month and a half) in every major offensive cat-

egory save home runs and runs batted in, including a slugging average of .457. But all that is gravy for the 27-year-old Curaçao native, as he was signed mostly for his glove, which has been dazzling. Add the offense and defense, and "Simba" trails only Astros phenom Carlos Correa in the MLB midseason shortstop rankings at bleacherreport.com.

READERS' CHOICE: MIKE TROUT

BEST DUCKS PLAYER

RYAN GETZLAF

The Ducks have remained relevant the past 10 years mostly due to the 2003 draft, which netted them both Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf. While Perry has made eight all-star teams and became the first Duck to win the Hart Trophy (in 2011), the tough and versatile center Getzlaf (who is also team captain and a former *Weekly* cover boy) is the glue that solidifies the offense. Hockey fans know that while goals get the highlights, the key is passes that set up those goals, and Getzlaf's 58 assists last year were third in the league, tied for his second-highest season total ever. Not too shabby for a guy starting his 13th season who is already the team's all-time leading assists leader, topping icon Teemu Selänne last year. (Of course, he's got a little ways to go to catch the NHL career leader, some dude named Wayne Gretzky, who tallied an unbelievable 1,963 in his career!)

READERS' CHOICE: RYAN RESLER

BEST BOTANICAL GARDEN

SHERMAN LIBRARY & GARDENS

This picturesque den of modern relaxation and nature is a treat to visit, whether as a late-morning stroll, educational tour on plants and plant life, or for serious historical research. Founded in 1950 by businessman Arnold Haskell, who named it after his mentor, the Sherman Library & Gardens contine to draw visitors to its beauty, offering an oasis away from the hustle and bustle of PCH traffic. The Tropical Conservatory is a humid greenhouse that holds numerous flowers and plants usually native to islands below the equator (as well as some turtles and koi fish). The Tea, Rose, Succulent, Central and Specimen Shade gardens are all true to their names. Then there's the pleasing-to-the-eye fountains, unique sculptures, Cafe Jardin restaurant and in-house archival facility, which is possibly the best place to find information and history on the Pacific Southwest.

2647 E. Coast Hwy., Corona Del Mar (949) 673-2261 www.sigardens.org

BEST DAY TRIP

SALVATION MOUNTAIN

You don't need to be religious to find this sprawling slab of adobe worthy of pilgrimage. This psychedelic monument to God was built by Leonard Knight, considered to be either a passionate artist, a religious fanatic, or both. But once you arrive and are witness to the labor of love Knight spent years creating (and in the sweltering Imperial County heat, no less!) you have to marvel at the extreme commitment to detail and give respect where it's due. Numerous concave rooms reveal tiny folk art-style paintings, with "Jesus Loves You," "All People Are Loved," "God Is Love" and Bible passages quoted all over the walls. Trucks and old cars permanently parked nearby are also painted with the same wild, embellished, colorful style. Visitors may not be able to walk up the giant red heart that greets them, but Knight had the gumption to build a staircase so people could climb to the top. While Knight departed this earth in 2014, volunteers (and volunteer cats) provide upkeep, monitor visitors and give free water. Get thee to this divine roadside attraction, only two hours away from our metropolitan county.

Beal Road, Niland, www.salvationmountain.us

READERS' CHOICE: SANTA CATALINA ISLAND

BEST VACANT LOT

OLD SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD LINE

When railroad land goes up for sale, few are willing to buy it. The tracts are too thin for houses and too long for a single building. That's why vacant lots such as the one between La Veta and Fairhaven avenues in Orange end up abandoned for so long. But the locals, as always, find a use. They've used the La Veta-Fairhaven tract for years as a trail for joggers and dog walkers. Kids with BMX bikes built ramps of packed earth and can be seen jumping in the

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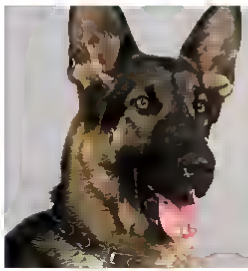
Sports & Recreation



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air from local back yards. And though a private firm finally bought the land a few years ago and fenced it off, that didn't stop folks from squeezing through the bars and adding fresh tags to the concrete walls

BEST PUB TRIVIA

BOOTLEGGER'S BREWERY

For all the Tyrion Lannisters of the world, there's a place for you to do what you do best: drink and know things. Where better to show off your intellectual superiority than at your local brewery? Bootlegger's Brewery in Fullerton was one of the first large-scale craft breweries in OC to offer pub trivia, and the Wednesday-night ritual has been going on for years now, often to a packed house (get there early). Oh, and the place is dog-friendly, so bring your direwolf.

130 S. Highland Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-2337. www.bootleggersbrewery.com

READERS' CHOICE: ANAHEIM BREWERY

BEST STREET TO STREET RACE

KIMBERLY AVENUE, FULLERTON

It's about 1.5 miles of straight asphalt between Raymond and Placentia avenues in an industrial part of Fullerton. Now, the obligatory disclaimer: Don't street race. But when it's 3 in the morn, and you need to scratch your Dom Toretto itch ... *just saying!*

BEST SPORTSCASTER

OREL HERSHISER

With the Curse of Scully now banished, and the Dodgers in the midst of a record-breaking regular season, it's been Joe Davis and former players Orel Hershiser and Nomar Garciaparra calling the majority of games for those few locals who brave Spectrum's dodgy service to get SportsNet LA. Davis, though only 29, is a more than capable play-by-play guy, and Garciaparra is a decent analyst, but the Bulldog is the star of the announcing staff. Now in his fourth season in the Dodgers TV booth, Hershiser draws on his stellar 18-year playing career, tenure as a pitching coach and executive for the Texas Rangers, and seven years as an ESPN game analyst. He is astute, affable and, unlike the homer hacks in that other Los Angeles baseball TV booth, doesn't sound like a mumbly dummy when offering his insights and occasional criticisms.

READERS' CHOICE: VIN SCULLY

BEST PLACE TO FLY A DRONE

HUNTINGTON STATE BEACH

A creep would say the best place to fly a drone is outside the bedroom window of a hot neighbor, which we're both proud and disturbed to say happened to one of us recently. Given the human imagination, there are plenty of warped ways this increasingly popular flying camera machine can be abused. Let's take the high road here and hope you do as well. Laguna Beach is a geographically eye-pleasing location, but city officials earlier this year imposed numerous flight restrictions that include Main Beach and Heisler Park. For the best, least-worrisome droning, visit Huntington State Beach, where authorities haven't yet issued related ordinances. You can capture spectacular images of crashing waves, surfing packs of high, inked-up skinheads, and pools of swimming ocean animals.

Beach Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach

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BEST RESTAURANT

TACO MARÍA

We tried to give this award to someone else—we really did. But when we recently visited, we got a surprise: chumiles, a sort of stinkbug. Our guest looked at it and gagged, then actually ate it. Served as an appetizer, it was a small bowl filled with glistening balls. The chumiles had the crunch of corn nuts and the flavor of beef; dressed with salt, lime and pequín powder, this dish alone beats every restaurant in Orange County for originality, sustainability, execution and flavor. That most diners will probably eschew it only shows how backward we remain as a dining county—and how light-years ahead of everyone else Carlos Salgado and his Taco María remain. Better luck next year, OC restaurants who want to become the best in the land, because you'll need it to topple *el rey*.

3313 Hyland Ave., Costa Mesa, (714) 538-8444, www.tacomaria.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE RANCH RESTAURANT & SALOON

BEST MEAT-AND-POTATOES DISH

HENDRIX

You'll never regard Costco's chicken the same way again after you see what Hendrix is able to do with an oversized Ronco rotisserie. It produces chicken so juicy and a porchetta so sumptuous it becomes a stinging rebuke of every dry chicken and pork chop you've ever had. But the best thing that comes out of that rotating contraption is actually the lamb. Brought out sliced on a warmed dish, it's served above a pool of chicken jus and alongside tiny potatoes roasted by the meat drippings. It's easily OC's best lamb outside Anaheim's Little Arabia.

32431 Street of the Golden Lantern, Laguna Niguel, (949) 248-1912; hendrixoc.com

BEST CHEF

DEE NGUYEN

His 17-course pop-up dinners are the stuff of legend and sell out within hours of being announced; South County housewives ditch their Pilates class for a chance at Nguyen's cast-iron desserts and tempura Scotch eggs. Friends and family indulge in his homemade mead or tepache, while everyone can take home a bottle of his Viet-Mex hot sauce, equal parts tangy and *chingón*. Instagram followers get daily lessons of Nguyen's foraging adventures in the Orange County wilderness. And the Break of Dawn owner has a heart: When Hurricane Harvey wrecked Houston, Nguyen immediately announced a fundraiser, with all funds going to a legit nonprofit that will spend the money to feed folks immediately. All humans should aspire to be like Nguyen, and all chefs should try to pal up with him to learn even a little bit. And Nguyen? He just does him.

Break of Dawn, 24231 Avenida de la Carlota, Ste. P-4, Laguna Hills, (949) 587-9418; breakofdawnrestaurant.com

BEST BURRITO

BURRITOS LA PALMA

Albert Bañuelos' burritos are small and slender, no bigger than a New York-style egg roll. There's no bulk from rice, guacamole or sour cream. Instead it's laser-focused on two things: the tortilla and the meat. The flour tortillas are from a secret family recipe and, quite frankly, are the best ever constructed by a mortal man not from Sonora. On the inside, it chews like the doughy part of a buttery croissant, but on the outside, it's as delicate as a crepe. Most important, these tortillas aren't dry or mealy. And when they're wrapped around Bañuelos' wet fillings, they create a burrito that has no equal.

410 N. Bristol St., Santa Ana, (657) 266-0575; www.burritoslapalma.net

READERS' CHOICE: EL POLLO NORTEÑO

BEST HOT DOG/BRATS

WURSTHAUS

If you've eaten at a better sausage sandwich restaurant than Wursthaus, you were probably at LA's Wurstküche, the original hipster sausage-sandwich joint that inspired this place and others of its kin. Even if Wursthaus is the "Blurred Lines" to Wurstküche's "Got to Give It Up," it gets the details right. The beer collection is good. The sausages are juicy and full of snap. The pretzel buns are hearty, and the sauerkraut crisp and fresh. This is imitation at its most flattering and delicious.

305 E. Fourth St., Ste. 106, Santa Ana, (714) 760-4333, wursthausdtsa.com.

READERS' CHOICE: PORTILLO'S

BEST FISH TACO

CENTRO COLLECTIVE

Brent Omeste is the *taquero* behind Centro Collective, the dueling taco-and-pizza shop in Lake Forest he opened this year with partner Chad Urata. Omeste makes all kinds of tacos, from a chicken with crispy wisps of meat easily

BEST OF 2017

Readers' Choice Winner

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT
BEST BURRITO
BEST FOOD TRUCK

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270 E 17th St, Costa Mesa
shirleysbagels.com

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714 367 2030
7640 Beach Blvd, Buena Park
portosbakery.com

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BEST BAR TO DANCE
The Vintage Cocktail Lounge
714 462 6102
8550 Chapman Ave, Stanton
thevintagecocktaillounge.com

BEST BARTENDER
Dustin Adams - The Cellar in Fullerton
714 525 5682
305 N Harbor Blvd, Fullerton
cellardining.com

BEST BBQ
Bad to the Bone
949 218 0227
31736 Rancho Viejo Rd,
San Juan Capistrano
badtothebone-bbq.com

BEST BEER
Gunwhale Ales
949 239 9074
2960 Randolph Ave,
Costa Mesa
gunwhaleales.com

BEST BEER SELECTION/CRAFT BEER BAR
The American Dream
714 374 1330
21056 Pacific Coast Hwy #130,
Huntington Beach
theamericandreamhb.com

BEST BIKINI BAR
The Green Girl Saloon
14341 Beach Blvd,
Westminster
thegreengirlsaloon.com

BEST BOBA
SHARETEA
Multiple Locations
1992sharetea.com

BEST BOURBON
Bulleit
bulleit.com

BEST BREAKFAST
Jagerhaus German Restaurant
714 520 9500
2525 E Ball Rd, Anaheim
jagerhaus.net

BEST BREAKFAST BURRITO
Farmer Boys
Multiple Locations
farmerboys.com

BEST BURGER
25 Degrees
714 960 2525
412 Walnut Ave,
Huntington Beach
25degreesrestaurant.com

BEST BURRITO
El Pollo Norteno
Multiple Locations
elpollonorteno.net

BEST CHEESE SHOP
Center Street Cheese Shop
714 520 0225
149 W Center Street Promenade,
Anaheim
facebook.com/
centerstreetcheese

BEST CHINESE RESTAURANT
Fortune Cookies Restaurant
Multiple Locations
fortunecookiesrestaurant.com

BEST COFFEE
Thunderkuag Brewery @ Social Costa Mesa
949 642 2425
512 W 19th St, Costa Mesa
facebook.com/
Thunderkingbrewing

BEST COFFEEHOUSE
Hidden House
Multiple Locations
hiddenhousecoffee.com

BEST CRAFT BEER SHOP
Hi-Time Wine Cellars
949 650 6463
250 Ogle St, Costa Mesa
hitmewine.net

BEST CRAFT COCKTAILS
The Blind Rabbit
E Santa Ana St, Anaheim
theblindrabbit.com

BEST CUPCAKE
Bubba Sweets
714 840 8200
16479 Bolsa Chica St,
Huntington Beach
bubbasweets.com

BEST DATE NIGHT
Blue Gold
714 374 0038
21016 Pacific Coast Hwy d200,
Huntington Beach
dinebluegold.com

BEST DAY-DRINKING BAR
Cruisers Pizza Bar Grill
Multiple Locations
cruiserspizzabargrill.com

BEST DELI
C4 Deli The Cure for the Common
714 263 1555
200 N Broadway, Santa Ana
c4deli.com

BEST DESSERT
Bruster's Real Ice Cream
657 233 5950
12879 Harbor Blvd N-3
Garden Grove
brusters.com

BEST DINER
Ruby's Diner
Multiple Locations
rubys.com

BEST DIVE BAR
The Cave Sports Bar Anaheim
714 740 0490
626 W Orangewood Ave,
Anaheim
facebook.com/
thecavesportsbar1

BEST DOG-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT
Lazy Dog Café
Multiple Locations
lazydogrestaurants.com

BEST DOUGHNUT SHOP
SideCar Doughnuts
949 673 5424
270 E 17th St #18
Costa Mesa
www.sidecardoughnuts.com

BEST FARMERS' MARKET
Downtown Huntington Beach / Surf City Nights
Main Street - Downtown
Huntington Beach
surfcitynights.com

BEST FISH TACO
California Fish Grill
Multiple Locations
cafishgrill.com

BEST FOOD DELIVERY SERVICE
Postmates
postmates.com

BEST FOOD HALL
4th Street Market
714 486 0700
201 E 4th St, Santa Ana
4thstreetmarket.com

BEST FOOD TRUCK
El Pollo Norteno
Multiple Locations
elpollonorteno.net

BEST FRENCH TOAST
Bread Crumb Ohana Café
714 960 5051
19079 Beach Blvd,
Huntington Beach
bread-crumb-ohana-cafe.local-cafes.com

BEST FOODIE EVENT
Pacific Wine & Food Classic
pacificwineandfood.com

BEST FRIES
Wursthaus
714 760 4333
305 E 4th St #106, Santa Ana
wursthausdtsa.com

BEST FROZEN YOGURT
Yogurtland
Multiple Locations
yogurt-land.com

BEST GAY BAR
Tin Lizzie Saloon
714 966 2029
752 St Clair St, Costa Mesa
tinlizziesaloon.com

BEST GREEK RESTAURANT
HB Pita Grill
714 964 7482
19893 Brookhurst St,
Huntington Beach
hbpitagrill.com

BEST HAPPY HOUR
Hurricane's Bar & Grill
714 374 0500
200 Main St Suite 201,
Huntington Beach
hurricanesbargrill.com

BEST HOT DOG/BRATS
Portillo's
714 220 6400
6390 La Palma Ave,
Buena Park
portillos.com

BEST ICE CREAM
Joe's Italian Ice
714 703 2100
2201 S Harbor Blvd, Anaheim
joesice.com

BEST INDIAN RESTAURANT
Clay Oven
949 552 2851
15435 Jeffrey Rd #116, Irvine
clayovenirvine.com

BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT
Roma D' Italia
714 544 0273
611 El Camino Real, Tustin
romaditalia.com

BEST JAPANESE RESTAURANT
Tsunemi's
562 592 5606
17238 Pacific Coast Hwy,
Huntington Beach
tsunamihb.com

BEST JUICE/SMOOTHIE SHOP
Juice It Up!
Multiple Locations
juiceitup.com

BEST KOREAN BBQ
GEN Korean BBQ House
Multiple Locations
genhoreanbbq.com

BEST KOREAN RESTAURANT
Heshiga Koreau Kitchen
714 557 4911
3033 Bristol St M, Costa Mesa
facebook.com/pages/
Hashigo-Korean-
Kitchen/119757156074505

BEST LATE-NIGHT DINING
Harbor House Café
Multiple Locations
harborhousecafe.com

BEST LOBSTER ROLL
Slapfish
Multiple Locations
slapfishrestaurant.com

BEST LOCAL BEER
Four Sons Brewing
714 564 7501
18421 Gothard St Suite 100,
Huntington Beach
foursonsbrewing.com

Food & Drink

mistaken for carnitas to a vegetarian with a fried-cheese disc enveloping squash blossoms, mushrooms and zucchini that even a carnivore would love. But his masterpiece might be the beer-battered fish he cradles inside a soft tortilla with a caesar-dressed slaw. But you shouldn't stop at the tacos. Have a few of Urata's pizzas, too. When you're lucky enough to be in a restaurant that honors two of the most assimilated ethnic foods in America under one roof but isn't a Pizza Hut and a Taco Bell, be sure to have everything.

24531 Trabuco Rd., stes. E-F, Lake Forest, (949) 305-5224, www.centrocollective.com

READERS' CHOICE: CALIFORNIA FISH GRILL

BEST BAKERY

PORTO'S BAKERY & CAFE

Started 40 years ago in Glendale, Porto's has since become not only the quintessential immigrant success story, but also a Southern California institution. The cheese rolls are always ethereal and crisp, the potato balls, soft and fragrant of cumin. But the real reason everyone waits in line at the Buena Park location (or heck, every branch) is because of how low its prices are. Where else can you get a birthday cake that serves a dozen people for less than $25 that actually tastes good? In fact, Porto's has become so prevalent and beloved for those cakes that it would be strange to encounter a birthday party without one. And it's for this reason that Porto's may be the best bakery of our generation.

7640 Beach Blvd., Buena Park, (714) 367-2030, www.portosbakery.com

READERS' CHOICE: PORTO'S BAKERY & CAFE

BEST MALAYSIAN RESTAURANT

SEASONS KITCHEN USA

The Chinese Malaysian place Khim and Soon Teoh opened in Anaheim isn't the only restaurant to serve Malaysian food in the county. It's actually the second. But Seasons Kitchen USA might just be the only one that matters. The char siu that tops the oil-dressed noodle is pork candy. The traditional Malaysian desserts are sublime. And though you've always been able to get nasi lemak at OC's other Malaysian restaurant, Seasons Kitchen's version is better by a thousand miles.

The nasi, the fragrant rice enriched with coconut cream and pandan, is scrumptious—a satisfying meal on its own. But surrounded by satellites of sides such as ikan bilis (fried anchovies with peanuts), slices of cucumber, tomato, hard-boiled eggs, sambal, and a potato-and-chicken curry, the Teohs' nasi lemak runs laps around the competition—even if there really is just the one.

641 N. Euclid St., Anaheim, (714) 829-4213, seasonskitchenusa.com

BEST JUICE/SMOOTHIE SHOP

CANCUN JUICE

When you come to the realization that smoothies from the national chains are too expensive, too artificial-tasting and too loaded with calories, go to Cancun Juice and get yourself an agua fresca. You'll quickly discover these are the drinks you actually wanted when you thought you wanted a smoothie. Best of all, a Cancun Juice agua fresca will cost you almost half the price and half the calories. Then there's flavor. Without sherbet or yogurt, every agua fresca tastes like the fruit from whence it came. The watermelon agua fresca tastes like watermelons, and the strawberry agua fresca tastes, well, like strawberries! The only thing added is water and sugar. And isn't that the whole point? If you still want smoothies, Cancun Juice does those, too, but you can bet it'll still taste better and cost less than those made by the chain that rhymes with "samba shoes."

Various locations; cancunjuice.net.

READERS' CHOICE: JUICE IT UP!

BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT

SALERNO

Through his many restaurants, Alessandro Pirozzi has proven he knows how to create the perfect Italian eatery. For Salerno, he revamped an old red-sauce joint and transformed it into something that's simultaneously modern and classic. No, you can't get pizza (there's simply no room in the microscopic kitchen for a proper oven), but you can—for the first time in a Pirozzi-branded place—customize your meat entree and sauce from a variety that includes elk and ostrich. Since pasta is the main draw, everything from squid-ink-tinted noodles to ravioli stuffed with rabbit can be had. With the three other Pirozzi restaurants and now Salerno, you never need to do the Never Ending Pasta Bowl® at Olive Garden.

220 Beach St., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-2980, salernolb.com.

READERS' CHOICE: ROMA D' ITALIA

BEST KOREAN BARBECUE

KANG HO-DONG BAEKJEONG

As the Kang Ho-dong Baekjeong chain expands and gets more popular, you might discover the quality of the service starting to lag behind the quality of the meats. Thanks to the hordes of customers who line up for hours to eat its unparalleled Korean barbecue at reasonable prices, the servers at the Buena Park location and now the Irvine spot seem programmed to rush you through your meal to get the next set of customers to take your place. But you endure it because Kang Ho-dong Baekjeong's meats are top-notch, and those grills with the built-in side troughs are a work of genius. As the fat melts, it cascades and accumulates into a well of beaten egg, turning it into the world's best breakfast scramble. And when you do get around to eating the pork, you notice the jowls gushing juice and the slabs of pork belly rippling with scrumptious fat—

BEST LOCAL BREWERY
Barely Forge Brewery
714 641 2084
2957 Randolph Ave
Costa Mesa
barleyforge com

BEST LOCAL IPA
Barely Forge Brewery - The Orange Curtain IPA
714 641 2084
2957 Randolph Ave,
Costa Mesa
barleyforge com

BEST LOCAL WINERY
Orange Coast Winery
949 645 0400
869 W 16th St, Newport Beach
orangecoastwinery.com

BEST LOOKING PATRONS (MOST ATTRACTIVE CROWD)
The Bungalow Huntington Beach
714 374 0399
21058 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington Beach
thebungalow com/hb

BEST LOUNGE
Casa
949 577 0075
620 W 19th St, Costa Mesa
casabarcostamesa.com

BEST LUNCH SPOT
LOT 579 - Pacific City
949 577 0075
21010 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington Beach
gopacificcity com/lot-579

BEST MARGARITA
Ola Mexican kitchen
714 969 7300
21040 Pacific Coast Hwy #200,
Huntington Beach
olamexicankitchen com

BEST MARTINI
The Vintage Cocktail Lounge
971.242 8729
8550 Chapman Ave, Stanton
thevintagecocktaillounge com

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT
El Pollo Norteno
Multiple Locations
elpollonorteno net

BEST MICHELADAS
Taco Brat
844 328 8226
2101 Harbor Blvd, Costa Mesa
tacobrat.com

BEST MIDDLE EASTENN RESTAURANT
Olive Pit
Multiple Locations
olivepitgrill.com

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR (CENTRAL OC)
Mission Bar
657 266 0699
302 N Main St, Santa Ana
missionbarsa com

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR (COASTAL OC)
Blackies By tha Sea
949 675 1074
2118 W Oceanfront, Newport Beach
blackiesbythesea.com

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR (NORTH OC)
Mulberry Street
714 525 1056
114 W Wilshire Ave, Fullerton
mulberryfullerton.com

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR (SOUTH OC)
Pub Thirty Two
949 716 0687
23962 Alicia Pkwy, Mission Viejo
pubthirtytwo com

BEST NEW RESTAURANT
Puesto
949 608 9990
8577 Irvine Center Dr, Irvine
eatpuesto com

BEST OLD-FASHIONED
25 Degrees
714 960 2525
412 Walnut Ave, Huntington Beach
25degreesrestaurant com/huntington-beach

BEST ORGANIC FOOD
Seabirds
714 549 2584
2930 Bristol St, Costa Mesa
seabirdskitchen com

BEST OUTDOOR DINING
Oceans & Earth
714 970 7027
20305 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda
oceansandearthrestaurant com

BEST OYSTERS
Shuck Oyster Bar
949 420 0478
3313 Hyland Ave, Costa Mesa
shuckoysterbar.com

BEST PANCAKES
The Original Pancake House
Multiple Locations
originalpancakehouse.com

BEST PERUVIAN RESTAURANT
Casa Inka
714 847 7555
8610 Warner Ave, Fountain Valley
casainkarestaurant.com

BEST PHO
Lotus Bistro
949 287 8827
325 Old Newport Blvd #1, Newport Beach
lotusbistronewport.com

BEST PIE
Polly's Pies Restaurant
Multiple Locations
pollyspies com

BEST PIZZA
The Pizza Press
Multiple Locations
thepizzapress com

BEST PLACE TO PICK UP A ONE-NIGHT STAND
Baja Sharkaez
Multiple Locations
sharkaez.net

BEST POKE
North Shore Poke Co.
Multiple Locations
northshorepokeco com

BEST PUB
Malarkey's Grill & Irish Bar
949 675 2340
3011 Newport Blvd, Newport Beach
malarkeysgrill.com

BEST PUNK-ROCK BAR
Johnny's Saloon
714 848 0676
17428 Beach Blvd, Huntington Beach
johnnyssaloon com

every morsel as sweet as the service staff is sour

14160 Culver Dr., Irvine, (949) 559-9678; also at 5171 Beach Blvd., Buena Park, (714) 739-9678, www.67bus.com

READERS' CHOICE: GEN KOREAN BBQ HOUSE

BEST FOOD-DELIVERY SERVICE

NEIGHBORHOOD ELOTERO

A man (or *mujer*) who walks around your neighborhood with a cart, honking his (or her) horn with the promise of corn on the cob slathered with mayo, chile powder, butter and cheese? If your neighborhood doesn't have one, then you truly live a terrible life

READERS' CHOICE: POSTMATES

BEST PIZZA

RANCE'S CHICAGO PIZZA

Owner Rance Ruiz worked for years to perfect his Chicago-style pizza, opening the first Rance's location in Costa Mesa in 2013, followed by a second location in Long Beach earlier this year. Aside from it being able to satisfy any Windy City refugee, Rance's is simply amazing pizza. The "stuffed" pie holds your choice of toppings underneath a blanket of rich, juicy tomato sauce, delicious dough and Wisconsin mozzarella and is baked in a 2-inch-deep dish pan. The deep-dish pizza—Chicago's signature pie—has a thick dough foundation covered with gratuitous layers of toppings, cheese and sauce bordered by a flaky, buttery crust. One pizza is a suitable meal for a few people, but pizza this good is too hard to share

1420 Baker St., Ste. B, Costa Mesa, (714) 708-2143; also at 5258 E. Second St., Long Beach, (562) 786-5566, www.rancespizza.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE PIZZA PRESS

BEST DESSERT

ZOV'S

Zov's isn't one of those hipster dessert places where the ice cream is made out of waffle cones and the waffle cones are made out of ice cream. It's OC dining royalty, of course, but way underrated for its desserts, especially at its Irvine location. A bakery is attached to the main restaurant, with an army of cookies, cakes and tarts available. The highlight is a delectable flourless chocolate cake, served cold and enclosed in folds of thin, solid chocolate

3815 Portola Pkwy., Irvine, (714) 734-9687; www.zovs.com/locations/zovs-irvine

READERS' CHOICE: BRUSTER'S REAL ICE CREAM

BEST CHINESE RESTAURANT

BEST FOODS

While it offers mainstream Chinese for the office-drone set, the truthfully (though boringly) titled Best Foods actually specializes in Shaanxi cuisine. Its most famous meal is the yangrou paomo, which finds pita bread boiled into a lamb soup—as hearty as it sounds. What Best Foods calls "Chinese hamburger" is really roujiamo, which eschews condiments and veggies in favor of meat, meat, meat. And the sweetbread soup is the best offal dish in Orange County: earthy and milky and delicious.

2626 Dupont Dr., Irvine, (949) 600-2898

READERS' CHOICE: FORTUNE COOKIES RESTAURANT

BEST FOOD HALL

LOT 579 AT PACIFIC CITY

Putting Portola, Pie-Not, Hans' Homemade Ice Cream and Burnt Crumbs in one space is winner enough. But throw in a meat shop, a cupcakery, Italian food and a beer bar, and you might forget you're just a five-minute walk away from the Pacific. And then you look out the doors, and remember that Pacific City in Huntington Beach is the mall with it all!

21010 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (714) 930-2345, www.gopacificcity.com

READERS' CHOICE: 4TH STREET MARKET

BEST DOUGHNUT SHOP

DK'S DONUTS

There are always people outside this small walk-up in Orange, peering in the

TIN LIZZIE SALOON
OC'S PREMIER LGBT BAR
OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017
VOTED BEST GAY BAR IN ORANGE COUNTY
tinlizziesaloon.com
752 ST CLAIR ST, COSTA MESA, CA • OPEN NOON-2AM DAILY

BEST RAMEN
Tajima Ramen
562 269 0761
3768 Long Beach Blvd #106, Long Beach
tajimasandiego.com/locations/tajima-long-beach

BEST RESTAURANT
The Ranch Restaurant & Saloon
714 817 4200
1025 E Ball Rd, Anaheim
theranch.com

BEST RESTAURANT AMBIANCE
BLK Earth Sea Spirit
714 960 0996
300 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington Beach
blkearthseaspiritshb.com

BEST RIBS
Tulsa Rib Company
714 633 3760
220 E Katella Ave, Orange
tulsarib.com

BEST ROCK CLUB
House of Blues
714 778 2583
400 Disney Way #337, Anaheim
houseofblues.com/anaheim

BEST SANDWICH
Philly's Best Cheesesteaks
Multiple Locations
eatphillysbest.com

BEST SEAFOOD RESTAURANT
The Kickin' Crab
Multiple Locations
thekickincrab.com

BEST SIGNATURE COCKTAIL
Pacific Hideaway - Dazed & Confused
714 965 4448
500 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington Beach
www.pacifichideawayhb.com

BEST SPORTS BAR
Legends
Multiple Locations
legendssportsbar.com

BEST STEAK
Prime Cut Café
714 532.4300
1547 W Katella Ave, Orange
primecutcafe.com

BEST SUNDAY BRUNCH
World Famous Gospel Brunch @ House of Blues
714 778 2583
400 Disney Way #337, Anaheim
houseofblues.com/anaheim/gospelbrunch

BEST SUNDAY FUNDAY
American Junkie
949 675 4444
2406 Newport Blvd, Newport Beach
americanjunkienb.com

BEST SUSHI
Sushi on Fire
Multiple Locations
sushiofire.com

BEST TACO
Wahoo's Fish Taco
Multiple Locations
wahoos.com

BEST TACO TUESDAY
Fred's Mexican Café
714 374 8226
300 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington Beach
fredsmexicancafe.com

BEST TEQUILA
Patron
patrontequila.com

BEST THAI RESTAURANT
Silk Thai Cuisine
714 964 1151
19690 Beach Blvd, Huntington Beach
gosilkthai.com

BEST UBTRADITIONAL BURGER
Slater's 50/50 - Peanut Butter and Jealousy Burger
Multiple Locations
slaters5050.com

BEST VEGAN RESTAURANT
Seabirds
714 549 2584
2930 Bristol St, Costa Mesa
seabirdskitchen.com

BEST VIETNAMESE ICED COFFEE
7 Leaves Café
Multiple Locations
7leavescafe.com

BEST VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT
LSXO
714 374 0083
21016 Pacific Coast Hwy d200,
Huntington Beach
dinebluegold.com/lsxo

BEST VODKA
Tito's
titosvodka.com

BEST WAFFLES
Bruxie Gourmet Waffle
Multiple Locations
bruxie.com

BEST WATERFRONT DINING
Ola Mexican Kitchen
714 969 7300
21040 Pacific Coast Hwy f200,
Huntington Beach
olamexicankitchen.com

BEST WHISKEY
Jack Daniel's
jackdaniels.com

BEST WHISKEY BAR
Johnny's Saloon
714 848 0676
17408 Beach Blvd, Huntington Beach
johnnyssaloon.com

BEST WINE BAR
The Robbins Best
714 568 9926
214 N Sycamore St, Santa Ana
robbinsnestwine.com

BEST WINE SHOP
Hi-Time Wine Cellars
949 650 8463
250 Ogle St, Costa Mesa
hitimewine.net

BEST WINGS
Buffalo Wild Wings
Multiple Locations
buffalowildwings.com

Thank you OC!
WE'RE HONORED
VOTED #1
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER BEST OF ORANGE COUNTY 2017 24TH ANNUAL PEOPLE'S CHOICE
BEST PIZZA
BEST FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT
BEST HAPPY HOUR
JOIN US FOR Happy HOUR
MON-FRI 3PM - 6PM
SAT 11AM - 4PM
square one 1 PIZZA CAFE
5789 Alton Parkway
Oak Creek Village • Irvine
(by Orchard Supply Hardware)
949.451.1750
SQ1PIZZA.COM
Thank you to our guests for voting and helping us win #1!

windows at the day's creations and staring up at the mounted menus of breakfast bagels, ice-cream-filled options, smoothies and caffeinated concoctions, and more. Not only can you get traditional favorites (cake doughnuts with sprinkles, raised rings with chocolate-y glaze), but you can also find fancy ones (green tea matcha, Fruity Pebbles, strawberry cheesecake, peanut butter and jelly, etc.) and even eclairs (including ones filled with pastry cream and Oreos). Open 24 hours, DK's is always there for your sweet tooth's needs.

3744 E. Chapman Ave., Ste. A, Orange, (714) 633-5858, Instagram: @dksdonutsorange

READERS' CHOICE: SIDECAR DOUGHNUTS

BEST KOREAN RESTAURANT

MHAT KOREAN RESTAURANT

The kind, middle-aged women at Mhat offer home-style dishes—comforting soups and stews and things that warm you from the inside out. Their signature dish is dahk galbi, a stew that morphs into at least three other dishes as you eat it. What begins as a soup of dark-meat chicken swimming in a gochujang-tinted broth with sliced potatoes, cabbage, chewy rice cakes, hard-boiled eggs and perilla leaves transforms as you eat it. The soup reduces and thickens into a spicy glaze that coats everything. And when you're nearly finished, one of the women will add rice to the dregs and stir-fry it to make a risotto-like dish. You leave with a distended tummy and a feeling as though you've been fed and coddled by a Korean mom.

8412 Moody St., La Palma, (714) 252-5033.

READERS' CHOICE: HASHIGO BOREAN KITCHEN

BEST NEW RESTAURANT

LSXO

The clubby restaurant within a restaurant at Bluegold is tiny and has become the worst-kept secret in Huntington Beach. It can be hard to get a reservation on a Saturday night, you need to plan your dinner at least a month in advance, but it's worth it—and not just for the ambiance (which gets its own spotlight in these pages). LSXO operates on an entirely separate menu than Bluegold that's not only all-Vietnamese, but also the window to the soul of its chef, Tin Vuong. This is Vietnamese food for insiders who already know where to get the best hánh xèo and hu tieu. And for those who are from the same generation as the chef, Vuong blasts old-school hip-hop that's heavy on Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg. When the whole house sings along to "Gin and Juice," you realize how essential it is to the whole experience as the nuoc mam is to the food.

21016 Pacific Coast Hwy., Ste. D200, Huntington Beach, (714) 374-0083, dinebluegold.com/lsxo

READERS' CHOICE: PRESTO

BEST BAR FOR DANCING

ORIGINAL MIKE'S

It was once the space where OC institution Phil Shane performed his weekly lounge act (hot damn!) and is now the site where a diverse roster of talent play on a nightly basis, from hip-hop, jazz and post-punk to rockabilly, the Funk Freaks, some iteration of cumbia legends La Sonora Dinamita, and enough oldies singers (including Brenton Wood, Joe Bataan and Thee Midniters) to make Art Laboe jealous. Original Mike's expansive venue features two dance rooms, allowing a generous assembly of baby boomers, older *cholos* and millenninals to groove and dance together in harmony.

100 S. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 550-7764, www.originalmikes.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE VINTAGE COCKTAIL LOUNGE

BEST BAGELS

THE BAGEL SHACK

This mini-chain churns out consistently solid rounds that you can select yourself or leave up to the counter staff when getting it gussied-up with toasting and schmear. Go for the gusto and pile the daily baked goods with breakfast or lunch delights. They're a hearty, handheld vessel to soothe the hangriest of appetites.

777 S. El Camino Real, San Clemente, (949) 388-0745; 23653 El Toro Rd., Lake Forest, (949) 305-2034; 31876 Del Obispo Rd., Ste. 1, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 488-8023, www.thebagelshack.com

READERS' CHOICE: SHIRLEY'S BAGELS

VOTED
BEST
WINE SHOP
& BEST
CRAFT BEER
SHOP
OCWEEKLY
BEST OF
READERS' CHOICE
WINNER
2017
THANK YOU ORANGE COUNTY
FOR SUPPORTING YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD LIQUOR &
WINE STORE SINCE 1957!
250 OGLE STREET
COSTA MESA, CA 92627
949.650.8463
HITIMEWINE.NET
Hi-Time
WINE
Cellars

Food & Drink

BEST BOBA

MILK BOX

While there are many versions of boba drinks out there, Milk Box pushes the notion that proper milk tea should be made without artificial ingredients or flavors. From activated charcoal to ceremonial matcha, adding boba is almost an afterthought with its photo-worthy sips. Drinks are purposely crafted on the mildly sweet side, so you can actually taste what you've been missing out on. And with its first drive-thru (in Westminster), access to the best boba milk teas also means not having to get out of your car.

27741 Crown Valley Pkwy., Ste. 329-5, Mission Viejo, (949) 420-8131; also at 2493 Park Ave., Ste. 42, Tustin, (714) 712-0143; and 10051 McFadden Ave., Westminster, (714) 884-4102; milkboxbar.com.

READERS' CHOICE: SHAKETEA

BEST DOG-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT

PARK BENCH CAFÉ

The act of feeding your dog scraps off your table at a restaurant is just barbaric. Give 'em a bowl, damn it. Not only that, but also fill it with something that's just for them. That's only one of the aspects of the Park Bench Café that makes it the perfect place to parade your pooch. Located on the edge of Huntington Beach's Central Park, the human/canine eatery keeps it simple, consisting of a few scattered picnic tables with umbrellas. But the food for both species is worth a trip. While you gobble down a farm-fresh breakfast or a giant cinnamon roll, your dog will have its nose buried in its own bowl of the many cutely named dishes, including "Rover Easy" (two scrambled eggs), Hot Diggity Dog (cut-up all-beef hot dogs), Bow Wow Wow (boneless, skinless chicken filet)—you get the picture. It'll also make a great photo for your Instagram!

17732 Goldenwest St., Huntington Beach, (714) 842-0775; www.parkbenchcafe.com.

READERS' CHOICE: LAZY DOG RESTAURANT & BAR

BEST CUPCAKE

PATTY'S CAKES AND DESSERTS

Sometimes success stories are as sweet as they sound. For Patty's Cakes, it started more than 30 years ago with a single mom named Patty and her three sons. Decades later, financial help from her onddle son along with friends and family helped Patty open a brick-and-mortar to fill with her passion for fluffy, frosted confections, including cakes, cake balls, cookies and ice cream. Trust us: The cupcakes are always the star. Combining well-crafted traditional tastes with whimsical creativity, faves such as the Elvis cupcake (banana cake with peanut butter mousse topped with bacon) and red velvet with chocolate-chip mousse are small bites of heaven made from scratch, with some motherly love thrown in for good measure.

825 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton; (714) 525-8350; pattys-cakes.com

READERS' CHOICE: BUBBA SWEETS

BEST DATE NIGHT

STUDIO

From the moment you step out of your car, the Montage goes out of its way to accommodate, even stepping out of the walkway to wish you a "Good evening" as you meander down the path to Craig Strong's dining room. While it may be a formal experience, your server will remind you that the kitchen is more than able to assist with dining preferences. All this plus a perfect sunset view equate to a fine meal.

30801 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-6030; www.montagehotels.com/lagunabeach.

READERS' CHOICE: BLDEGOLD

BEST FRIES

HAVEN GASTROPUB

Poutine is the ultimate late-night food for people who like to share. But Haven's grass-fed-beef poutine will turn you into a selfish, satisfied bastard. Fries are topped with gravy, Cheddar and cheese curds, but the Stemple Creek Ranch beef elevates this rustic dish. Though it might look unassuming when it comes to you in a brown takeout box, you'll know you came to the right place to vanquish those munchies once you behold the gooey goodness. Besides, how can you go wrong with steak and cheese on top of fries?

190 S. Glassell St., Orange, (714) 221-0680; www.havengastropub.com

READERS' CHOICE: WURSTBARS

BEST PERUVIAN

AJI PERUVIAN CUISINE

Though the Irish may be synonymous with potatoes, the Incas practically worship them, at least when it comes to the kitchen. For proof, look no further than Aji, a Long Beach treasure that doesn't skimp on our favorite starch. Start with the cold mashed-potato causas topped with fresh avocado and seafood and move on to the delicately fried yucca atop tangy ceviche doused in leche de tigre sauce. Even Aji's desserts are proud to rep that spud life: The sweet potato picarones for dessert are dusted with powdered sugar and drizzled with molasses—and we're barely peeling the skin off the menu here!

2308 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 439-8545; www.ajiperuviancuisine.com

READERS' CHOICE: CASA INKA

BEST COFFEEHOUSE

TRU BRU ORGANIC COFFEE

Camouflaged inside a hilly plaza, locals frequent this cozy caffeine hole for all of its coffee goodness. Housing its own fancy oven and abundant seating options, Tru Bru accommodates the bustling weekend crowds. Made-to-order sandwiches, breakfast burritos and, yes, avocado toast make it a popular spot for young families seek-

READERS' CHOICE AWARD:
BEST VIETNAMESE ICED COFFEE
7 LEAVES CAFE
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1724 W. 17th St. Santa Ana, Ca 92706 714-953-4355

Food & Drink

ing a casual bite. You can't go wrong with a hot (or iced) latte utilizing Tru Bru's milk options and alternatives. If the terms "organic," "non-GMO" and "pesticide-free" really mean something to you, then park here.

7626 E. Chapman Ave., Ste. D, Orange, (714) 771-7170; trubrucoffee.com

READERS' CHOICE: HOOBER HOUSE COFFEE ROASTERS

BEST LOCAL WINERY

PEDAL TO THE METAL

Every year, radio legend Tom Leykis makes available his own Pedal to the Metal syrah, drawn from grapes in the Santa Ynez Valley. Not only is the wine a manifestation of the professor—bold, articulate and far more complex than you'd assume—but the sale of his vino helps Leykis continue his online radio show. Grab a bottle, and tell Tom to blow you up, Kobe-style!

newnormalnetwork.com

READERS' CHOICE: ORANGE COAST WINERY

BEST MIDDLE EASTERN RESTAURANT

OLIVE TREE RESTAURANT

It has been a long time coming, but Olive Tree Restaurant is finally expanding into its own prowess. The Palestinian-owned eatery in the heart of Anaheim's Little Arabia boasts a new location, logo, menu items, outdoor patio seating and late-night hours. And while we miss the old location just on the other side of Little Arabia Plaza, all the growth doesn't come at the expense of anything that made Olive Tree heavenly in the past. The kitchen still serves up legendary lamb shanks so tender the meat slides off the bone and into your stomach. Olive Tree offered mansaaf specials (a Jordanian lamb dish soaked in a yogurt sauce) on Fridays before anyone else in town did, and it's still the best way to start a weekend off right. And with bigger digs? The restaurant's amazing iftar buffets draw huge crowds during Ramadan, but without the long lines of old.

518 S. Brookhurst St., Ste. 1, Anaheim, (714) 535-2878, facebook.com/OliveTreeAnaheimCa

READERS' CHOICE: OLIVE PIT GRILL

BEST GREEK RESTAURANT

KENTRO GREEK KITCHEN

You don't have to wait around for annual festivals in Anaheim and Irvine to chow down on great Greek food because Kentro's Greek Kitchen in downtown Fullerton delights all year long. The menu is a palatable plethora of soups, salads, entrées, flatbreads and sweets. Play it safe with pita sandwiches if you must, but don't be afraid to mispronounce all the multisyllabic menu items. Rewards come

Craft House began as a neighborhood restaurant in Dana Point and is now rated one of the Top Restaurants in Orange County. With New-American-styled food, fish right out of the Dana Point Harbor delivered straight to the kitchen, local craft beers and a bar with all the craft cocktails you can think of, it's hard to leave disappointed. Join them for their weekly happenings!

CRAFT | HOUSE
FOOD | DRINK

Featured as Top Places to Eat in Orange County

Chef Blake featured as 'Chefs to watch in 2017'

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WEDNESDAY: 4:00 – 6:00
THURSDAY: 4:00 – 6:00
FRIDAY: 4:00 – 5:00 & 9:00 – CLOSE
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34091 Pacific Coast Hwy. Dana Point, CA 92629 | www.eatatcrafthouse.com | @eatatcrafthouse

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VISA

in the form of pork souvlaki speared on wood skewers atop wild rice with a side of tzatziki sauce strained 48 hours and mixed with imported Kalamata virgin olive oil. Wash it all down with a bottle of Mythos Greek beer, then top off a perfect outing with loukoumades for dessert.

100 S. Harbor Blvd., Ste. A, Fullerton, (714) 278-0344, kentrogreekkitchen.com

READERS' CHOICE: H.B. PITA GRILL

BEST MARGARITA

TACO ROSA

Whether sipping with a gourmet Mexi meal or imbibing during happy hour, Taco Rosa's slew of margaritas are perfect for whatever the occasion. The Irvine cantina (there's also a location in Newport Beach) blends tequilas with fresh fruit juices stiff enough to loosen things up. Like tamarind, horchata, mango or coconut margaritas? Taco Rosa has you covered on all fronts. Try the Noir Frida Cadillac, but drink responsibly, lest a dead ringer for Diego Rivera starts to look appealing through intoxicated eyes!

13792 Jamboree Rd., Irvine, (714) 505-6080; tacorosa.com.

READERS' CHOICE: OLA MEXICAN KITCHEN

BEST SIGNATURE COCKTAIL

VACA

In Spain, vermouth isn't something to throw into cocktails but rather a drink unto itself, a digestif that both aids in digestion and fucks you up. Vaca makes its Vermut de Grifo from more than 20 botanicals and serves it on tap, and it's as pleasing and economical as it sounds tangy, refreshing, boozy, brilliant.

695 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 463-6060, wwwvacarestaurant.com

READERS' CHOICE: PACIFIC HIDEAWAY

BEST NONTRADITIONAL BURGER

NAUGLES TACOS & BURGERS

While hipster joints try every which way to reinvent the classic American burger, the resurrection of Naugles brings back its Mexican take. Sure, there are great beef-patty pleasers on the menu, from the Ortega to the Naugleburger, but none offers the peculiarity that is the Bun Taco. It's everything the name implies, with all of the flavors of an old-school hard-shell taco stuffed inside a hamburger bun. Naugles never plays cheap with its ground beef. Add shredded lettuce, grated Cheddar cheese and a slathering of white sauce, and the Bun Taco satisfies newcomers and nostalgic eaters alike! There's no better bag of fries in all of OC than Naugles' own crispy taters to pair it with, either.

18471 Mt. Langley St., Fountain Valley, (657) 845-7346; www.nauglestacos.com

READERS' CHOICE: SLATER'S 50/50

BEST WATERFRONT DINING

SEALEGS AT THE BEACH

Though Orange County is home to dozens of waterfront eateries on its 45 miles of Pacific Ocean coast, the most different is found not far from the Los Angeles County line: SeaLegs at the Beach. We'll concede our search here wasn't for fine dining that would delight your snobby Manhattan aunt or cheap-eat deals your daddy demands—life is a series of tradeoffs, no? You're not visiting SeaLegs to eat your last meal, though the food is decent and always improving. Singer Pharrell Wilhams' line from "Happy"—"Room without a roof"—comes to mind, given this outdoor establishment is located on the sands of Bolsa Chica State Beach, where ocean and sky, both usually blue, dominate the view. Created by indomitable restaurateur (and former Weekling) Alicia Whitney, who has the pulse of the twenty- and thirtysomethings, SeaLegs lures laidback folks looking for an enjoyable time drinking, nibbling, tanning, people-watching and listening to music that, depending on the date, is delivered by live bands.

17851 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (714) 698-4188; www.sealegsatthebeach.com

READERS' CHOICE: OLA MEXICAN KITCHEN

BEST PANCAKES

PLUMERIA CAFE BY STACKS

Luscious, large and topped by real whipped butter, the buttermilk

BEST OF 2017

4TH STREET MARKET

BEST FOOD HALL

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4THSTREETMARKET.COM

pancakes are perfection. But cook in blueberries or banana and macadamia nuts, and your flapjacks will be covered in drool before the syrup pours. And that syrup should be none other than Stacks' famous coconut variety, which even diehard maple devotees pour into deep pools. Plumeria Cafe is a Stacks Pancakes outpost—but with an aloha breakfast/brunch/lunch menu to augment your hotcake order, and as at all Stacks locales, expect a line!

23811 Aliso Creek Rd., Ste. 122, Laguna Niguel, (949) 300-6829. Instagram: @plumeria_cafe_by_stacks

READERS' CHOICE: THE ORIGINAL PANCAKE HOUSE

BEST WAFFLES

NORMS

You laugh; we devour the perfect cheap breakfast drowned in so much syrup it makes Houston resemble the Atacama Desert.

Various locations; normsrestaurants.com

READERS' CHOICE: DENNY'S

BEST OLD-SCHOOL FOOD TRUCK

TAQUERIA EL BURRION—SAHUAYO

Garden Grove steals one away from SanTana with this newish spot. The menu is easy to navigate, servings are massive, and the food is well-priced. Try the savory al pastor or the crunchy tripas with grilled onion. The quesadillas are a beautiful golden-brown and stuffed with smoky-sweet onions.

12012 Magnolia St., Garden Grove, (714) 745-8134

BEST JAPANESE

WAFU OF JAPAN

The sign above Costa Mesa's Wafu of Japan near the 73 and 55 freeways simply states, "Sushi," but don't let the lack of signage creativity fool you. Inside this charming, small, neighborhood restaurant, chef Harry's operation offers inspired dishes ranging from, obviously, sushi to baked dishes, teriyaki plates, salads and noodle soups. Local diners, who've been returning here for years, long ago began calling it a hidden gem. That description remains apt. On one of our recent visits, we devoured jumbo portions of fried soft-shell crab, Sockeye Salmon sashimi and the Halibut Dynamite. But the baked oysters—first sautéed, then baked in their shells with a sunrise mayonnaise sauce over beds of warmed fresh spinach—can't be topped.

320 Bristol St., Ste. G, Costa Mesa, (714) 641-7321, www.wafuofjapan.com

READERS' CHOICE: TSUNAMI SUSHI

BEST VINTAGE BARWARE

THE MIXING GLASS

Gabrielle Dion's charming store not only carries a great booze collection, but it also features all sorts of beauties to class up your bar, from antique bar carts to gorgeous shot glasses to memorabilia, books, swizzle sticks and more. Class up!

3313 Hyland Ave., Costa Mesa, (714) 975-8952. Instagram: @themixingglass

BEST WINE SHOP

OLD VINE CAFÉ

Old Vine's offerings are Lilliputian compared to other stores or even its neighbor at the CAMP. But what chef/owner Mark McDonald lacks in inventory, he more than makes up for in a selection borne from McDonald's annual cooking tours across Italy. Buy one, or take advantage of a six-pack special. And then stay for one of the most criminally unappreciated bistros in Orange County.

2537 Bristol St., Ste. A102, Costa Mesa, (714) 545-1411, www.oldvinecafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: HI-TIME WINE CELLARS

BEST ACAI BOWLS

BLUE BOWL

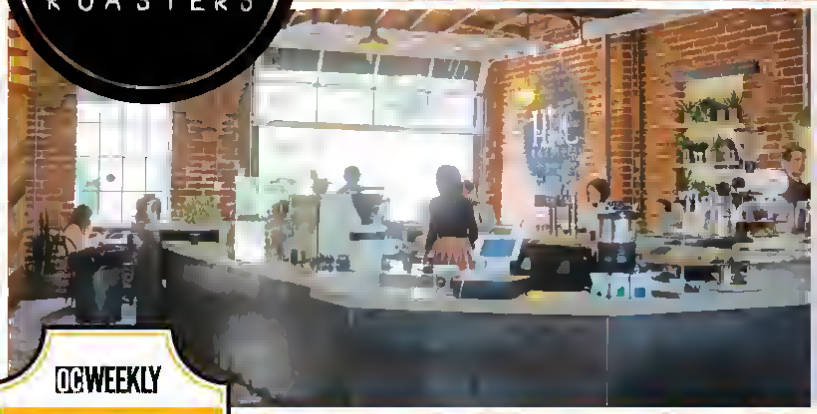
Start with a base of açai, pitaya or steel-cut oats, and work your way through vitamin-rich garnishes such as chia

BEST OF 2017

coffee • pastries

HIDDEN HOUSE COFFEE

HHC ROASTERS



OCWEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

BEST COFFEE HOUSE IN ORANGE COUNTY 2017

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seeds, cacao nibs and goji berries. Top it off with some creamy almond butter, fresh fruit and agave. Try a different combination every time that's tasty, full of antioxidants and healthy AF.

417 S. Main St., Orange, (714) 876-5303; www.mybluebowl.com

READERS' CHOICE: BLUE BOWL

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT

EL PICANTE

It specializes in the food of Michoacán, and most of the dishes are guisados. Stews are made every morning and kept bubbling throughout the day. Chicharrón is simmered until it's so fatty it makes pork belly seem as rich as a pencil. Huilotas (squab) come bathed in a bright tomatillo salsa; birria arrives in a bubbling bowl or dry, the better to put inside tortillas so fresh that when you bite into them, the inside of the thick beauties can scald you. The chavindecas (here, spelled Michoacán-style as "chividenkas") are stuffed quesadillas with your choice of meat and those amazing tortillas. Even better is the aporreadillo, the best huevos rancheros ever. The meat is cecina (dried, salted beef that's similar to jerky but sweeter), and it's in a red salsa that will burn you if you're not careful.

1610 S. Standard Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 285-0642.

READERS' CHOICE: EL POLLO RUSTEÑO

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OF ORANGE COUNTY

BEST LATE-NIGHT DINING

HARBOR HOUSE CAFÉ

Whether in North or South County, these Coast Highway-located 24-hour diners are where night owls meet the early birds and the menu weighs a ton. And so will you, if you finish the mountain that is the normal portion size. The pies as well as the biscuits and country gravy with chopped sausage and bacon are made in-house, and the burgers and malts or low-cal/healthy options or fries smothered all kinds of ways just scratch the surface of what can fill a belly in the wee hours, whether after a show or when the drunk and disorderly has worn off.

16341 Pacific Coast Hwy., Sunset Beach, (562) 592-5404; also at 34157 Pacific Coast Hwy., Dana Point, (949) 496-9270, www.harborhousecafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: HARBOR HOUSE CAFE

BEST BEACH FOOD SHACK

TACKLE BOX

Deep into this new wave of snack-shack overhaul—some adding açai bowls and falafel, some fancifying condiments for burgers—stepped Brian Huskey. The chef has established himself as the paragon of seaside fare—worth every penny, worth staying at the beach all day. Before 11, pick a breakfast: chilaquiles, black beans, tomatillo sauce with fried egg? Yes, but there's also French toast with almond butter, banana, chocolate and maple syrup. Grubs + Snacks tempt with chowders, chicharrón and poke. Then there's the rolls—shrimp, catfish or chicken club—and a pork belly bánh mì. East Coasters should come on the weekends when the Maine lobster rolls up, an expensive habit SoCal natives could easily develop. Happy beachcombing!

3023 E. Ocean Blvd., Corona del Mar, (949) 723-0502, tackleboxoc.com

BEST OF 2017

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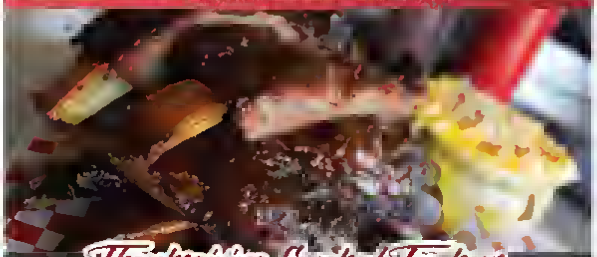
Gustavo Arellano, Editor OC Weekly



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BEST BREAD

BREAD ARTISAN BAKERY

The family-owned and -operated wholesale bakery also makes our favorite cheese rolls: Cheese splotches reduced to cracklins, bread as fluffy as cotton candy inside, with jalapeños judiciously placed throughout—BRUH.

1943 E. Pomona St., Santa Ana. (949) 428-5301
www.breadartisanbakery.com.

BEST FERMENTED TREAT

DOCENT BREWING

All the food at this shiny industrial brewhouse is inspired by fermented veggies made on the premises. Kimchi, sweet pickles, or jalapeño and carrot escabeche are always available, adding tang, crunch and heat to sandwiches, quesadillas and mountaineer rolls—a West Virginia staple reworked here with a sweet dough stuffed with pepperoni, salami, cheese, and a jalapeño or habanero. The kitchen is always experimenting with these alkaline foodstuffs, said to combat the over-acidification of our insides, so be sure to ask for the fermented special of the day as you sample your flight where small planes once took off and soared away.

33049 Calle Aviador Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano
docentbrewing.com.

BEST CRAFT COCKTAILS

EL MERCADO MODERN CUISINE

Cesar Cerrudo's drinks at this Alta California spot are consciously curated, inventive, damn tasty and change with the seasons. And while he can do the classics with the best of 'em, order the ones that call upon Cerrudo's Peruvian heritage: pisco-heavy, aji amarillo-scented, and using liqueurs based on Andean barks.

301 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana. (714) 338-2446,
www.mercadomodern.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE BLIND RABBIT

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BEST MICHELADAS

ALTA BAJA MARKET

Most places are just hopping on the michelada train; this store makes an incredible seven, from the sweet to the spicy to the fabulous La Malandrina, which uses chile mango, craft Mexican beer and aji amarillo paste to create the best ode to Latin American unity since "Despacito." They just debuted a breakfast michelada, heavy on the tomato and bacon bits and coming with a slice of toast topped with a poached egg, that'll soak up the worst hangovers. And if you can't drink at the moment? Take home one of the make-your-own-michelada kits.

201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 783-2252; www.altabajamarket.com

READERS' CHOICE: TACO BOAT

BEST BARTENDER

EMILY DELICCE

The OC bartending world's beloved Shrub Queen, Emily Delicce is a total *chingona* who can whip together creative cocktails as easily as she can outdo Jean-Claude Van Damme on the splits. Before stepping into her current role as general manager at 320 Main in Seal Beach, Delicce launched Vacation Bar from the ground up and has had notable gigs at Casa, Boathouse Collective, Vaca, Blinking Owl and the Mixing Glass. And as the current head of the OC Bartender's Cabinet, she's leading the charge to make OC's drinking scene a safe space free of lecherous bros.

Instagram @shrub.queen.

READERS' CHOICE: DUSTIN ADAMS AT THE CELLAR

BEST COFFEE

CONTRA COFFEE & TEA

Founders Julie Nguyen and Paul Del Mundo first got attention in OC's cutthroat caffeine scene with unique creations such as Dirty Horchata and Fi'i fizz orange soda, all served from a cute van. It's Contra Coffee & Tea's individualistic style and innovative approach that recently landed them a brick-and-mortar tasting room within the 1888 Cultural Center in Old Towne Orange, where you can get a nitro-powered cold-brew fix six days a week.

115 N. Orange St., Orange, (714) 696-8783 www.contracoffeeandtea.com

READERS' CHOICE: THUNDERKISS COFFEE BAR AT SOCIAL

BEST BREAKFAST BURRITO

ATHENIAN BURGERS #3

Nick's is great, and Troy's is wonderful, and Nate's Korner is the second-best breakfast burrito in Orange County. But no one can beat this Buena Park standard's assemblage of fluffy scrambled eggs, potatoes, your choice of meat (we recommend the combo of bacon, sausage and ham) and cheese wrapped in a blanket-sized tortilla tinted orange *gracias* to the stovetop grease. It's hot and especially delicious when doused in salsa verde.

8517 La Palma Ave., Buena Park, (714) 523-9599

READERS' CHOICE: FARMER BOYS

BEST DEEP-FRIED DISH

KIM HONG EGGROLLS

Kim Hong's small storefront has attracted a loyal customer base for 11 years, all counting on her crispy cha gio—Vietnamese egg rolls. She offers eight varieties of freshly rolled, fried-to-order beauts—crunchy, warm and packed tight. The best part is you can buy them frozen to take home and bake for friends and family and pass them off as your own ... or whenever you're just craving a tasty, flaky roll.

14115 Goldenwest St., Westminster, (714) 895-0030; www.kimhongeggrolls.com.

BEST DISTILLERY

BLINKING OWL DISTILLERY

Orange County's first distillery since Prohibition, husband-and-wife team

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Robin and Brian Christenson always wow every time they put out a new release, from gin to vodka to their herbaceous aquavit. Pre-sales for their straight bourbon have already sold out so we suggest not sleeping on the first rye whiskey ever legally distilled in Orange County!

807 E. Washington Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 852-3947, blinkingowldistillery.com

BEST OLD FASHIONED

THE BLIND PIG

Snag a comfy patio seat with a view of Rancho Santa Margarita Lake, then watch day dissolve into night with an Old Fashioned. Tony Monaco and Jarryd Graaff's eatery is known for gourmet American cuisine, an eclectic wine list and a rotating selection of craft beers, but the speakeasy-style bar also pours some of the best cocktails in the county, with an impressive attention to detail when it comes to quality ingredients. To that end, order your classic Old Fashioned with Copper Fox Rye Whiskey or Evan Williams Bonded Bourbon (or one of each to compare). Yes, your tab can balloon quite easily at $12 a pop but you should be sipping the stiff concoction as you would a martini anyway. Feeling adventurous? Ask if one of the barrel-aged selections is a rye, whiskey or bourbon. It'll be $3 more per cocktail, but money well spent if you make a new elixir-of-the-gods discovery.

31431 Santa Margarita Pkwy, Rancho Santa Margarita, (949) 888-0072, www.theblindpigoc.com

READERS' CHOICE, 25 DEGREES

BEST FOOD TRUCK

LOBSTA TRUCK

If you spot the Lobsta Truck upon arrival at an outdoor event in Orange County, you are guaranteed to at least have a positive experience when it comes to your meal. This is thanks to its signature lobster roll, which features steamed, chilled

BEST OF 2017

lobster meat in a butter-grilled New England-style split-top roll. You can have that meat with drawn butter or seasoned mayo, as you'd find in tuna or chicken salad. Either version is amazing, bringing the spirit of Maine to the opposite coast. At $13 per roll, it is a pricy food-truck item, but, come on, it's friggin' lobster! By the way, did you know Lobsta Truck caters? And do you know what their latest catering offering is? It's a lobster bake with the clawed crustaceans stacked in a metal pot with greens that steam while your party guests circle in anticipation. The Lobsta Truck website has all the details on that as well as the schedule of where it will be near you next.

www.lobstatruck.com

READERS' CHOICE: EL POLLO BORTEÑO

BEST INDIAN RESTAURANT

PUNJABI TANDOOR

Despite the hustle and bustle of trendy tourist traps and hipster enclaves that have taken over Anaheim Boulevard, chef Jagdish Saini's Punjabi Tandoor continues to hold it down like the real G it is with its fabulous Northern Indian cuisine.

327 S. Anaheim Blvd., Ste. A, Anaheim, (714) 635-3155, www.punjabitandoor.com

READERS' CHOICE: CLAY OVEN

BEST BEER

BARLEY FORGE BREWING CO.

There are some double India pale ales with high alcohol-by-volume (ABV) contents and pleasingly complex flavor profiles, but the vast majority is less worthy of drinking than for wiping road tar off mag wheels. Don't let Barley Forge's logo for Two Louder fool you into believing it's on the swill side. It shows an amplifier volume knob cranked past 11 to 12, which is fitting because Two Louder's ABV is a hefty 12 percent. But the indicator's placement is more a play on Barley Forge's 8.3 percent double IPA One Louder, whose logo shows it cranked to 11 (à la Spinal Tap lead guitarist Nigel Tufnel's famous line). Miraculously, Two Louder's subtle blend of Nelson, Eureka, Lemon Drop, Hallertauer Blanc and Amarillo hops goes down smooth—fruity, even—without the boozy burn typical of most other double-digit ABVs. That can make Two Louder as dangerous as frat-party jungle juice, which may explain why it's only in limited production. So when you see it on a menu board, order a glass—and drink responsibly, rock star!

2957 Randolph Ave., Costa Mesa, (714) 641-2084, www.barleyforge.com.

READERS' CHOICE: GUNWALE ALES

BEST BAR IN OC

THE BEACHCOMBER CAFE

Okay, so technically the Beachcomber Café is a restaurant, but as anyone who has tried to eat lunch there on a weekend knows, the typical wait for a table is one to three hours. Which is why the tiny bar around the corner from the eatery has easily the best location anywhere in Orange County. Although you won't find any beers on tap, the selection of bottled, local craft ales easily makes up for that fact. And while you can always find a nice glass of wine, it's really all about the cocktails, particularly the Real Deal Margarita, made with Casamigos blanco tequila. Stick around for the blowing of the bugle and the raising of the Martini flag at sunset.

15 Crystal Cove, Newport Beach, (949) 376-6900, thebeachcombercafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: MISSION BAR

BEST GAY BAR

VLVT VELVET LOUNGE

One of the great ironies in Orange County: When it was at its homophobic worst, from the 1960s through the 1980s, there were multiple LGBT bars in Garden Grove and Laguna Beach. Now that OC is more *faaaabulous* than ever, the gay-bar scene is skinnier than a twink slimming down for White Party Palm Springs. But even if there were a bunch of gay bars, VLVT Velvet Lounge would probably still be the winner *gracias* to its stiff drinks, unlimited Taco Tuesday, and theme nights throughout the week. Latest promotion: BOYBAR 18+ on Sunday nights. No homophobia allowed!

416 W. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 664-0663, velvetoc.com

READERS' CHOICE: TIO LIZZIE SALOON

BEST OF 2017

ONE-OF-A-KIND FARM TO TABLE

THIS INNOVATIVE AND AWARD-winning restaurant features organic, aquaponically grown produce from its own farm. Located in the hills of Yorba Linda, Oceans & Earth is quickly becoming known as one of the best restaurants in Orange County. With their highly anticipated seasonal menus, Oceans & Earth is the ultimate farm-to-table and seafood dining experience. They are also proudly 100% gluten free. Start with small plate dishes like the Crab Bombs and Sea Urchins off the a la carte menu and move onto impressive entrees like the Filet Mignon served with foraged wild mushrooms and wild moss. You can indulge in high-end cuisine with a casual dining experience or for a real mind-blowing treat, make reservations for the Chef's Monthly Wine Dinner and take a culinary voyage that only O&E can offer. They are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner Tuesday-Sunday.

20305 YORBA LINDA BLVD., YORBA LINDA | OCEANSANDEARTHRESTAURANT.COM | 714.970.7027

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Food & Drink

BEST HAPPY HOUR

MESA

This Costa Mesa bar remains a hot spot, not just for its huge booths, retractable roof and wall made out of living plants, but also because the cocktails and food are ever-inventive and all the items on the happy-hour menu cost less than 10 bucks. Yeah, we wish it were longer than two hours, but at least you'll be able to stake your seat and watch the oncoming parade of girls out of Refinery 29.

725 Baker St., Costa Mesa, (714) 557-6700; www.mesacostamesa.com

READERS' CHOICE: BURRICABES BAR & GRILL

BEST LOUNGE

THE DISTRICT LOUNGE

During the day, the District is quiet and calm. People walking by will come in to grab a drink and some food and watch TV. But as the day continues, bar hoppers and Chapman University students start popping in, and the lounge atmosphere gets dialed to 11. And by the time it's 11 p.m.? Let's just say that the idea for Chapman's Undie Run had to have started here.

223 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, (714) 639-7777; thedistrictlounge.com.

READERS' CHOICE: CASA COSTA MESA

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR, COASTAL OC

CLASS OF '47

In desperate need to wipe off the hoity-toity from some opulent nouveau riche event, your reporter ducked into this tiny dive bar on the Balboa Pen and immediately fell in love, as if intoxicated by the stunning lack of pretension. Friendly regulars poured in and out of a side door leading to their spent cigarette butts. Three couples of twentysome-things rotated turns on one of the pool tables. Darkening stools at a far corner of the bar was a couple who appeared to be in their 70s, they either owned the joint or had spent enough to since Class of '47's opening in 1977. Speaking of disposable cash, dollar bills signed by patrons create a canopy on the bar's ceiling. Meanwhile, walls are filled with headshots of starlets from yesteryear and vintage signs with warnings such as "Beware of Loose Women and Pick Pockets." A door is taken over by a life-sized poster of Newport Beach's favorite adopted son, John Wayne, in full giddy-up. In the many returns to the bar since that first encounter, it has become abundantly clear that the attentive, hardworking and good-side-of-perky bartenders set the proper mood, whether you are there to day drink, drown out sorrows or down a nightcap.

209 Palm St., Newport Beach, (949) 675-5774, www.class of47.net.

READERS' CHOICE: BLACKIE'S AT THE SEA

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR, NORTH OC

THE SHADY NOOK

Nothing will ever worm its way into the livers of North OC drinkers like the legendary Sam's Place, a fixture on Brea Boulevard for more than 60 years before shutting down in 1994. But this joint is working on it. Opened in 1960, on the other side of the 57 where most of the worst of Brea is (malls, Farrell's, Brea residents), this is a quintessential local's pub. Off the beaten path and a hard-liquor-free pub, it caters to those who want a familiar place to hang and get happily buzzed, not an excuse to summon their inner sloppy and aggressive drunkies. It has plenty of suds, wine, soju and non-alcoholic things to keep you engaged, from NFL Sunday Ticket and pool tables to karaoke and all Brea-related gossip.

151 S. Kraemer Blvd., Brea, (714) 672-9440 www.shadynookbar.com

READERS' CHOICE: MULBERRY STREET BISTOBANTE

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR, CENTRAL OC

LAS VEGAS BAR

Our choice hasn't changed from last year. "It ain't what you think. This SanTana dive doesn't bother with Sin City emulation, or even with trying to get a cool crowd. It's *puro pinche pari* here: working-class Mexicans who come in and out of the dank bar from morning to late night to play some pool, watch a soccer match and get *borracho* on beer. But pop a top before the hipsters discover it.... Wait, Las Vegas now stocks Blue Moon?

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Food & Drink

Uh-oh ..." Postscript: The hipsters still haven't discovered it because Mexicans.

2339 S. Bristol St., Santa Ana, (714) 546-3035.

READERS' CHOICE: MISSION BAR

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BAR, SOUTH OC

THE SANDPIPER LOUNGE

There's a reason Laguna Beach locals call this place "The Dirty Bird." This veteran haunt, located on a cluttered stretch of tourist traps along PCH, is one of the few watering holes that leaves pretentious prices at the door. The small but mighty stage hosts low-key reggae such as local faves Rebel Rockers and World Anthem. A $5 cover gets you through the doors and surrounded by dreads, cheap rum, colorful board shorts and cougars galore.

1183 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-4684.

READERS' CHOICE: PUB THIRTY TWO

BEST SPORTS BAR

KELLY'S KORNER TAVERN

There are so many flat-screen TVs lining the walls and hanging from the ceiling, all tuned in to every conceivable sports match imaginable, that you'll probably get Tom Brady's shadow suntanned onto your face. Add a great food menu, a better beer selection, cute waitresses, darts and pool tables, and Kelly's Korner would be as celebrated an OC sports bar as Danny K's or Legends if it were anywhere but Placentia. Whatever. That just means easier seating for those of us who know.

907 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, (714) 961-8336
www.kellyskornertavern.com

READERS' CHOICE: LEGENDS SPORTS BAR

BEST BIKINI BAR

THE GREEN GIRL SALOON

What can we say about the Green Girl Saloon in Westminster that hasn't already been said among these pages in previous Best Ofs? There's a reason it wins year after year: boobs, yes, but it takes so much more than tatas. Its clean, almost-quaint English pub-like atmosphere immediately sets it above other watering holes—and that's before all the cute bartenders. Pair that with one hell of a marketing campaign—you can probably find one of their eye-catching full-page ads somewhere in this issue—and you've got yourself the best bikini bar around.

14341 Beach Blvd., Westminster, (714) 897-8612, thegreengirlsaloon.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE GREEN GIRL SALOON

BEST DIVE BAR

CASSIDY'S BAR & GRILL

Pool tables, a photo booth, a legendary cheeseburger, next to the beach, and a crowd ready to bring Newps' Fourth of July bacchanalia to the bar on any weeknight? Dive vibe heaven.

2603 Newport Blvd., Newport Beach, (949) 675-8949

READERS' CHOICE: THE CAVE SPORTS BAR

BEST DAY-DRINKING BAR

RECESS

Playground chef Jason Quinn's version of a beer cart, Recess offers cocktails on tap, a couple of seats for people-watching, and some televisions for you to view while you drink. Hungry but can't get a seat at Playground? Wander around 4th Street Market, find some grub, then get bark to Recess.

201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 486-0700
www.4thstreetmarket.com/recess.

READERS' CHOICE: CRUISERS PIZZA BAR GRILL

BEST BAR IN LONG BEACH

ALEX'S BAR

With the possible exception of DiPiazza's, there is no better place in Long Beach to get hammered while your eardrums burst from the amplified dissonance of your favorite local punk rock bands. Founded at the turn of the 21st century by Long Beach resident Alex Hernandez, the bar benefited from the closure of the Foothill and quickly became the go-to spot for punk shows,

even drawing the attention of Hollywood, HBO's *True Blood*, perhaps lured by the blood-red curtains adorning the walls, transformed the bar into Fangtasia. Seventeen years on, it's still going strong, with weekly trivia and karaoke nights, plus a regular rotation of great up-and-coming SoCal bands.

2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8232, www.alexsbar.com

READERS' CHOICE: GREAT SOCIETY CIDER & MEAD

BEST PIE

SWEETCIE PIE

Karen Uyeda exploded onto Southern California's pie scene as one of the winners of KCRW-FM 89.9's 2016 *Good Food* Pie Contest with her amaretto cherry pie with coconut oil crust taking first place in the vegan category. Uyeda's cottage-food company, Sweetcie Pie, has become a full-time job and has her in high demand for puff pastries, fruit tarts and delightful pies, all of which she will hand-deliver to you as long as you live in Irvine or its neighboring cities.

sweetciepie.com

READERS' CHOICE: POLLY'S PIES

BEST THAI RESTAURANT

E-SAN ROD-SAP

Located in Anaheim's Thai Corner, this is what a good Thai restaurant should be: unassuming, cheap and all about the food. The Issan-style cuisine is served two ways: combo platters from the premade-food counter or tableside service, ordered from a long menu printed on tri-fold paper. Fresh ingredients and Thai spices make up dozens of excellent dishes, but the gem is the crispy fried rice: a bevy of flavorful veggies punctuated by rock-hard rice crisps. You can even shop at the adjoining Thai market and bring delicacies of Southeast Asia home with you.

1719 W. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (714) 956-0503

READERS' CHOICE: SILK THAI CUISINE

BEST SUNDAY BRUNCH

HABANA

Habana's Cuban-inspired brunch menu makes you rethink buffets with its lavish spread of fresh seafood, succulent slow-roasted lechón, ropa vieja and classic paella Cubana (with seafood in every bite!). Strategically build your plate with made-to-order omelets, bocaditos, and tasty sides such as potato plantain gratin and Iberico chorizo. But leave room for an assortment of confections to balance out the savory; you can't go wrong with plantain maduros and waffles.

2930 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-0176, www.habanacostamesa.com.

READERS' CHOICE: HOUSE OF BLUES

BEST SUNDAY FUNDAY

VALLE DE GUADALUPE

Fuck FOX News, Baja California is perfectly safe if you know what you're doing. Get the perfect experience with Club Tengo Hambre, which offers an affordable wine-tasting day trip to Baja's Valle de Guadalupe. Enjoy a scenic ride along the coast to La Ruta del Vino, where you'll hit up three wonderful wineries and end with an outdoor Baja-Mediterranean meal among the vineyards. And you're back at the border by 8 p.m. Sunday—doesn't get any better than that.

clubtengohambre.com.

READERS' CHOICE: AMERICAN JUNKIE

BEST PUB

THE OLDE SHIP

Step aboard the Olde Ship, a stalwart of good, old-fashioned pub fare that stands strong in a new world of hip gastropubs. The Olde Ship hasn't changed much over its two decades in Orange County—and that's a good thing. With a strong selection of English ales, the Ship is great if you want to stop in for a pint or a full English dinner. It was an early adopter of pub trivia in OC, hosting live quiz nights for prizes long before it became a trend. And there are two ports to serve you: the larger original in Santa Ana and the smaller but quaint location in Fullerton. As its friendly motto goes, "You'll be a stranger here but once."

1120 W. 17th St., Santa Ana, (714) 550-6700; also at 709 N. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, (714) 871-7447; www.theoldeship.com

READERS' CHOICE: MALARKEY'S GRILL & ONE BELL OF AN IRISH BAR

BEST OF 2017

Food & Drink

BEST RIBS

THE SMOKING RIBS

Chef Kenny Tran is the quirky, passionate pitmaster at this Westminster barbecue joint. His slow-smoked meats are cooked for 15-plus hours, and Tran's sauces are so good that servers had to stop putting out full bottles lest they walk away in someone's purse. The brisket is fatty, smoky and tender, but it's the ribs that shine: pork and beef varieties fall off the bone and onto the paper plateware. Chewing is not really necessary, as the meats melt away upon hitting your tongue. The ribs are flavorful on their own, but they are also an ideal vessel to lap up as much of the two irresistible, housemade sauces (one brown sugar sweet; the other seriously spicy) as possible.

14211 N. Euclid St., Garden Grove. (714) 867-6057; www.thesmokingribs.com.

READERS' CHOICE: TULSA RIB CO

BEST MARTINI

TANTALUM

While not technically in Orange County, Long Beach's Tantalum, with its sweeping bar-width view of the Marina Pacifica and handy waterfront docking availability, will make any OC yachtsman feel right at home. While worth a visit for the people-watching opportunities alone, Tantalum's secret weapon is the Typhoon Chili martini—or, as the restaurant calls the concoction, "Tantalum-tini." Served in a classic martini glass, the drink combines vodka, peach and orange juice, and a Thai chile-infused simple syrup. Located on the spice scale somewhere between serano and habanero, the Thai chile packs just the right amount of fire to make the Typhoon Chili perfect.

6272 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach. (562) 431-1414. www.tantalumrestaurant.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE VINTAGE COCKTAIL LOUNGE

BEST VEGAN RESTAURANT

BUTTERLEAF

Vegetarian and vegan cuisine should taste as good as any other, and Butterleaf's mission is to prove it. With indulgent, deep-fried avocado bombs and awesomely messy sandwiches, it's safe to say it has accomplished that goal. Quinoa, sweet potatoes and beets are just a few of the soul-satisfying ingredients to look forward to. And be sure to check out the poutine at this TRADE food hall stall, found down the street from John Wayne Airport.

2222 Michelson Dr., Irvine. (949) 932-0420; www.butterleaf.co

READERS' CHOICE: SEABIRDS

BEST WINGS

BAOS HOG

There's really no way we can say the wings at Baos Hog are the best item on the menu because you could make an argument that just about everything on the limited menu is the best dish there. But it's easy to say that the salt-and-pepper chicken wings you get there will be better than any of the wings you'll pick up pretty much anywhere else. Served by the half-dozen in cardboard boats less fancy than anything you'd get animal-style fries in, the perfectly crispy and juicy spin on wings doesn't require any sauce to hit every level of amazing Chinese food and glorious fried-chicken goodness—although you really can't go wrong with the Sriracha-infused dip provided.

13918 Brookhurst St., Garden Grove. (714) 600-3311. www.mkt.com/baoshog.

READERS' CHOICE: BUFFALO WILD WINGS

BEST VIETNAMESE ICED COFFEE

BLKDOT COFFEE

Sharing building space with Google, this unassuming spot is so beloved by its neighbors and Equinox members that it agreed to also have Saturday operating hours. Recent announcements to expand further into Irvine and Laguna Beach mean BLKdot is here to stay. Serving caffeinated basics and beyond, its signature cup is an iced VTM coffee affectionately referred to as "crack." Grab a pastry or made-to-order bite, and make it a meal.

18510 Jamboree Rd., Ste. 150, Irvine. (949) 752-2982; www.blkdotcoffee.com.

READERS' CHOICE: 7 LEAVES CAFE

BEST FROZEN YOGURT

JOGHURT FROZEN YOGURT HAUS

As with its many competitors, Joghurt's setup is a self-serve dessert station. But that's where the similarities end. Offering bonus options such as waffle cones and even Dole or root beer floats is what sets them apart. Throw in a sunny interior and kind service, and those fro-yo flavors (including cake batter and peanut butter) taste even better than they already do.

17395 17th St., Ste. C, Tustin. (714) 573-0100.

READERS' CHOICE: YOGURTLAND

BEST WHISKEY BAR

MACALLANS PUBLIC HOUSE

Found at the far end of Brea's downtown Birch Street, Macallans is one classy spot to get your Irish on. Its selection is mind-boggling (250 scotch and whisky bottles—and counting), but allow your bartender to confidently steer you in the best direction. When in doubt, go for a flight. Savoring a hearty meal with your whisky choice is an unexpected bonus. Classic bangers and mash or mussels in a white-wine-butter broth, plus housemade chorizo? Just order both and share.

330 W. Birch St., Brea. (714) 529-1224; www.macallanspubbrea.com.

READERS' CHOICE: JOHNNY'S SALOON

BEST LOBSTER ROLL

SHUCK OYSTER BAR

Oyster may be in its name, but Shuck Oyster Bar has an expanded menu for those craving additional bites. Get your lunch or dinner fill at this breezy OC Mix corner outpost. Cradled in a buttery roll, Shuck's variation of the lobster roll includes avocado, crème fraîche and

Norman 'Sailor Jerry' Collins built his rep tattooing soldiers and sailors in WWII-era Honolulu. Known for his bold, iconic style, Collins became a legend af his craft, earning himself the title of undisputed father of the ald-school tattaa.

Sailor Jerry is a true American icon and a stubborn sonuvabitch who never compromised his standards or ideals.

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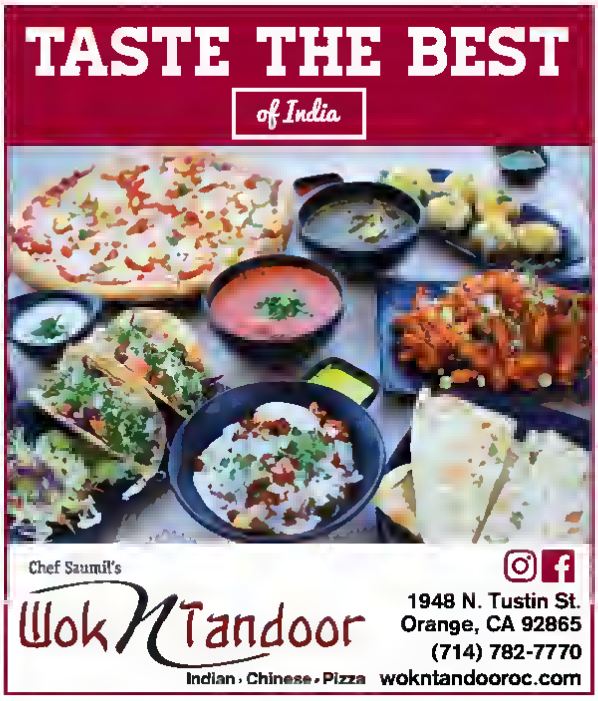


Food & Drink

lettuce. Want fries with that? They're already included. And a no-fee BYO option is always on the table.

3313 Hyland Ave., Costa Mesa (949) 420-0478, www.shuckoysterbar.com

READERS' CHOICE: SLAPFISH

BEST BURGER

BREW KITCHEN ALE HOUSE

The half-pound patty is a mix of chuck and brisket served with a roasted jalapeño, caramelized beer onions, pepper jack cheese, applewood bacon and ancho mayo. Grilled over almond wood, the Sancho Burger is best enjoyed with a side basket of fries, which, along with the burger, Brew Kitchen Ale House has perfected into an art form. And given the restaurant's rotating list of more than 20 beers, you'll have no problem finding the perfect IPA or saison ale to wash it all down.

10708 Los Alamitos Blvd., Los Alamitos, (562) 431-3900, brewkitchenalehouse.com

READERS' CHOICE: 25 DEGREES

BEST FOODIE EVENT

FRESH TOAST

Of course we're going to plug ourselves—what kind of self-serving infernal rag would we be if we didn't? But in this era in which people are more than happy to drop *mucho* money to stuff themselves silly on all-you-can-eat grub, Fresh Toast stands out because it honors Orange County's communal celebration: brunch. This year's was the best yet; next year will be better. Plus, Fresh Toast always happens to be at the same time as a riot somewhere in Orange County, so come join us to stay far away from losers.

READERS' CHOICE: PACIFIC WINE & FOOD CLASSIC

BEST FARMERS' MARKET

IRVINE FARMERS' MARKET

This market only gets better with age. Produce is in abundance, as well as opportunities to eat and shop. There's even live music for fans of all ages. With one of the most comprehensive and varied collections of food retailers in Southern California, it's easy to spend a couple of hours on a Saturday in the Mariners Church parking lot. Fortunately, the racetrack layout makes for easy navigation.

5001 Newport Coast Dr., Irvine, www.ocfarmbureau.org

READERS' CHOICE: SURF CITY NIGHTS STREET FAIR AND CERTIFIED FARMERS' MARKET

BEST STEAK

ELECTRIC CITY BUTCHER

You're going to have to cook it yourself, but ask the helpful butchers here after you buy one of the grass-fed beauts, and they'll tell you how to prepare the most spectacular slab of beef you'll ever have.

201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana (714) 474-9096, www.electriccitybutcher.com.

READERS' CHOICE: PRIME CUT CAFE & WINE BAR

BEST RESTAURANT AMBIANCE

LSXO

The notorious dining room within a dining room at Pacific City's Bluegold, LSXO is chef Tin Vuong's love letter to all things he grew up with and cherished. (See our pick for Best New Restaurant.) Daytime vibes show off the delicate details on every surface (even the ceiling is bathed in a butterfly mural) while you sip on afternoon tea service. Once the drapes are drawn, LSXO's mysterious side appears as you notice the "glow" from outside peeking in. Subtle machine-gun wallpaper and not-so-subtle '90s rap remind you this is no ordinary Little Sister branch.

21016 Pacific Coast Hwy., Ste. 0200, Huntington Beach, (714) 374-0083, dinebluegold.com/lsxo

READERS' CHOICE: BLK EARTH SEA SPIRITS

BEST DELI

C4 DELI: THE CURE FOR THE COMMON

Ah, the good old days when *OC Weekly*'s former owner figured there was no point in renewing our office lease and gave us two weeks to clean out our desks before telling us all to work from home. It was a golden age of avoiding freeway traffic

THE KICKIN' CRAB

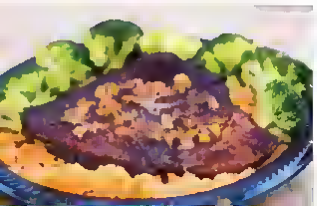
2017 Readers Choice Winners Best Seafood Restaurant in OC

Back in the 1970's, founder Jan Nguyen and her family immigrated to the United States from Vietnam. Nguyen found herself calling Louisiana home, worked in many restaurants, and quickly mastered Cajun-style cooking. After years of working with traditional spices, she started creating recipes with local seafood. With plenty of practice and industry experience, cooking up a flavor profile with a personal twist came easy. Fast forward to 2010, the first opening of The Kickin' Crab in Santa Ana, where Nguyen's dream of having her own restaurant came to life.

Peel-and-Eat dining has yet to go out of style and likely won't be going anywhere. Unlike any other dining experience, it's completely unique and seafood lovers can't seem to get enough. At The Kickin' Crab, you're immediately transported to a Cajun-like escape. The aroma of garlic, spices and creole cooking fills the air. Once your bucket of perfectly seasoned shellfish arrives at the table, it's time to put your bib on and dig in. No plates or utensils are needed, allowing you to fully immerse yourself into your meal. A perfect place to feast with family and friends, The Kickin' Crab is a fun, no-judgement zone.

With 13 locations in California, 7 of those in Orange County alone, you'll additionally find them in Carrollton, Texas. With plans to open soon in Dallas and grow towards the Inland Empire, it will be hard to ignore what The Kickin' Crab has to offer. Allowing you to get a bit of everything, their seafood combos are most popular. Create a trifold combination from a variety of seafood including shrimp, crawfish, Dungeness crab, lobster and more. Next, choose from their list of flavor options and spice levels. If you're feeling indecisive, you can't go wrong with "Kickin' Style", a combination of them all. Either way, your taste buds will thank you.

For those who don't fancy the ultimate hands-on experience, The Kickin' Crab has other options that are sure to please. Their mouthwatering Fish N' Fries, Seafood Scampi and Seafood Plates are just to name a few. Along with their Shrimp Bites – a tortilla scoop chip, filled with marinated grilled shrimp and topped with sour cream, pico de gallo and sriracha. Most importantly, don't skip the Garlic Noodles. Tender noodles sautéed in garlic butter, this must-have dish was named one of OC Weekly's Top 100 Favorite Dishes. Now voted the Best Seafood Restaurant 2017 by OC Weekly readers, know that whatever you choose at The Kickin' Crab will satisfy your taste sensation. Welcome to Crustacean Nation!



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except for once a week, when we'd gather at the Red Room at Chapter One in SanTana for our news meetings. On such occasions, early-bird Weeklings could be found across the street at C4, picking up sandwich—for one staffer, it was almost always the BELT (bacon, egg, lettuce and tomato) on squaw bread—and maybe enjoying a pint of beer during the wait. The impressive lunch menu (salads, burgers, and hot and cold sandwiches), complete with nifty sides such as marinated hardboiled eggs, seems almost custom-made to go down with beer, which is why C4 happens to have one of the best take-home craft-ale sections in the county.

200 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, (714) 263-1555, www.c4deli.com

READERS' CHOICE: C4 DELI: THE CURE FOR THE COMMON

BEST LUNCH SPOT

ANY TACO TRUCK IN SANTA ANA

At any other eating establishment in Orange County, you sit in a chair to eat; worst-case scenario, you lean onto a nice bar or high-rise table. In SanTana's *lonchera* scene, you either eat standing up, sitting on a curb, or leaning against a wall or the side of the taco truck—or do like the real *paisas* do and balance your tacos on your knee as you crouch. Eating outside sans the comfort of seat connects you to your hard-working ancestors and reminds you how pampered you've become. Pro tip: Wear pants, unless you're a flasher or something.

READERS' CHOICE: LOT 579 AT PACIFIC CITY

BEST ORGANIC FOOD

OCEANS & EARTH

When you've got a restaurant that grows its own food and even *catfish* — yeah, that's going to win here.

20305 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda, (714) 970-7077; www.oceansandearthrestaurant.com

READERS' CHOICE: SEABIRDS

BEST SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

ROE SEAFOOD

After a false start as a combo seafood-market/patio-seating eatery, Roe closed down to undergo a major renovation and expansion to include what used to be another restaurant next door. The result is an airy, sleekly designed bistro that serves the most inventive seafood in Long Beach and Orange County. The sashimi is of the highest quality and freshness, the oysters are heavenly; and the rolls are delicate, complex and compact. If sushi isn't your yen, go for the clam chowder or fish and chips. The full bar and extensive cocktail list provide options that aptly pair with whatever suits your mood. And don't forget: The takeout seafood market next door is still open.

5374 E. Second St., Long Beach, (562) 548-7110, roeseafood.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE RICKIE CRAB

BEST OYSTERS

WATER GRILL

When you run your very own seafood-distribution center, chances are you're also sourcing the best product for your restaurant. That's the prime advantage Water Grill has over the rest. Premium shellfish is shucked in a dedicated section of their sprawling ode to mollusks and beyond. Of course, you can also settle in to one of Water Grill's *two* other bars to enjoy your feast. That's how it's done at South Coast Plaza's newest shining star. Be prepared to wait, though. They show no signs of slowing down.

3300 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (949) 208-7080 www.watergrill.com

READERS' CHOICE: SHUCK OYSTER BAR

BEST CHOCOLATE-CHIP COOKIE

PADERIA BAKEHOUSE

Chunky, chewy and oh-so gooey, these oversized desserts are worth the wait in Fountain Valley. You can stock up on filled malasadas and cheesy ensaymadas all you want, but do not leave without a few cookies. Made with love and Belgian chocolate, Paderia manages to sneak in bits of pecans and walnuts for extra deliciousness. Grab them early in the day, as they tend to sell out during lunch hour.

18279 Brookhurst St., Ste 1, Fountain Valley (714) 916-5972, www.paderiabakehouse.com

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Food & Drink

BEST BARBECUE

BREW HAWG BBQ & BREWING CO.

Our arteries still haven't forgiven us for the *richtrichrich* half-pound of pork belly slathered in sauce that we ate, alongside mac and cheese, all washed down with a band-crafted root beer. Or the pulled pork, corn bread (with actual corn in it) and cranberry/peanut coleslaw. Despite the girth added each visit, we always float peacefully from the intimate restaurant.

665 N. Tustin St., Ste. J, Orange, (714) 502-4053, www.brewhawg.com

READERS' CHOICE: BAO TO THE BONE BBQ

BEST PHO

PHO 79

It's often said that because of the complexity of how its ingredients work together that no two bowls of pho made from the same kitchen will ever taste the same. So why not opt for a place where every bowl may taste a little different, but each is authentic, savory and memorable? That would be this venerable institution, one of the first pho restaurants in Orange County, the first region of the world outside Vietnam where the ongoing worldwide conquest of pho began taking hold. The decor tends toward the shabby, but it's always packed, the servings plentiful, and those who swear by these things vow that the oxtail pho—when available—is the best version of this highly modifiable dish they have ever slurped.

9941 w. Hazard Ave., Garden Grove, (714) 531-2490

READERS' CHOICE: LOTUS BISTRO

BEST TACO

TACO MARÍA

At $17 per pair, the arrachera tacos—the most expensive on Taco María's menu—aren't cheap. But they're unlike anything you'll find anywhere else in Orange County or the rest of the U.S. and maybe even Mexico. Served on thick, handmade blue-corn tacos in the style of central Mexico (the masa is sourced from heirloom fields), they are simple yet elegant: hangar steak and queso fundido with applewood bacon and roasted chiles. The smoky flavor of the steak and crispiness of the bacon dance elegantly with the heat of the chiles. We rated this the Best Taco of 2015 and still can't figure out why we took last year off.

3313 Hyland Ave., Ste. C21, Costa Mesa, (714) 538-8444, www.tacomaria.com

READERS' CHOICE: WAHOO'S FISH TACO

BEST FILIPINO RESTAURANT

CUCINA DE LIPA

Burrowed away in a strip mall, the Batangas-region meal is served *turo turo* style: Point, and the server will slap some on your plate. Among the dishes offered via the combo lunch menu—an amazing barbecue pork, longanisa sausages, hearty adobo and kare-kare—is the restaurant's famously good pancit lomi.

1738 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, (714) 835-9606, www.cucinadelipaoc.com.

BEST RAMEN

YOSHIHARU RAMEN

We hate chains, but this is the most satisfying ramen restaurant we've ever been to. Too easy to pass by on your way to Big Lots, Home Depot, or Chuck E. Cheese—all in the same strip parking lot—this tiny shop has only a few tables, television screens playing K-Pop videos, and a long counter, so gauge your time carefully, because there's often a wait list. We love everything that we've ever ordered, but the creamy garlic mouthfuls of flavor called the Tonkotsu Black is our go-to.

1991 N. Tustin St., Orange, (714) 998-1940, 6370 Beach Blvd., Ste. F-206, Buena Park, (714) 670-6567, www.yoshiharuramen.com.

READERS' CHOICE: TAJIMA

BEST ICE CREAM

ANDREW'S ICE CREAM

This legitimate mom-and-pop shop features a plethora of delicious, natural ice creams made in-house. In the news last year for demanding a crappy human who berated two Muslim customers leave the premises, Andrew's proves the Martin Luther King Jr. posters inside aren't just wall decorations. Good people doing the right thing and making

BEST OF 2017

our hearts swell: check. Great, non-chain desserts: check. Friendly service: check. Our pocketbooks open: check.

1548 E. Katella Ave., Ste. C, Orange, (714) 823-9350; www.andrewsicecream.com

READERS' CHOICE: JOE'S ITALIAN ICE

BEST POKE

UROKO CAFE

Crab meat, avocado (get two scoops and pay a bit extra), cucumber, onions, tuna, salmon, shrimp, eel, dried seaweed and chopped jalapeño, with spicy mayo. In a bowl of brown rice. A non-corporate soft drink. Chopsticks. Heaven.

3030 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 436-5798; 103 E. 17th St., Ste. 3, Costa Mesa; 5895 Katella Ave., Ste. C, Cypress; www.urokocafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: NORTH SHORE POKE CO.

BEST CHEESE SHOP

OLD VINE CAFÉ

See the entry for Best Wine Shop, substitute "wine" for "cheese," and the results are the same except for the six-pack, which Old Vine TOTALLY should do.

2937 Bristol St., Ste. A102, Costa Mesa, (714) 545-1411; www.oldvinecafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: CENTER STREET CHEESE SHOP

BEST OUTDOOR DINING

FARMHOUSE AT ROGER'S GARDENS

At Rich Mead's Farmhouse, there are gorgeous archways, gurgling fountains and a bar that resembles a barn. If you managed to score a reservation, you'll likely be seated at one of the many tables sheltered under a giant awning. If you're really lucky, you'll get a gazebo or a more private seat underneath the umbrellas overlooking Roger's Gardens, Newport Beach's toniest nursery. It doesn't matter when you go. The environment is just as bucolic at night, when the string lights twinkle as if rows of stars, as in the daytime, when the leafy garden is bright and fragrant.

2301 San Joaquin Hills Rd., Newport Beach, (949) 640-4415; farmhouserg.com.

READERS' CHOICE: OCEANS 8 EARTH

BEST LOCAL IPA

LEFT COAST BREWING CO.

Suds Clemente was on top of the craft-beer scene years before any other OC city, and Left Coast Brewing was among the pioneers. It continues to be at the top with ever-inventive brews, including the Nuclear Chi Chis. There is none better than this Session IPA, which wins on the name alone. Now, if only it could name something #nalgamedios.

1245 Puerta Del Sol, San Clemente, (949) 276-2695; leftcoastbrewing.com

READERS' CHOICE: BARLEY FORGE BREWING CO.

BEST LOCAL BREWERY

CHAPMAN CRAFTED

Creating great-tasting beer takes skill, experience and craftsmanship, and all these attributes are evident in every style of beer that Chapman Crafted head brewer Brian Thorson and crew are brewing every day. Hello Again Lager is crisp and refreshing, Hop Jab Double IPA is smooth with tropical-fruit notes, and Schilling for Sterling is a Scottish Ale deliciously malty with toffee and caramel on the back end. There are more styles to enjoy, and what sets Chapman Crafted apart from the rest is how every beer finishes so clean—not one has any aftertaste.

123 N. Cypress St., Orange, (844) 855-2337; www.chapmancrafted.beer

READERS' CHOICE: BARLEY FORGE BREWING CO.

BEST LOCAL BEER

ASYLUM BREWING

Off-the-menu items have been around since Adam and Eve—know your biblical history! And that's the case with Asylum Brewing in Ale-A-Heim—just tell them "the Butcher sent me," and order their absolutely rich and chocolate-y Casanova Frankenstein Imperial Stout blended with Fullerton's Bangarang coffee. The caffeine is sold separately, but add the fresh, medium roast to complement the superbly brewed Imperial Stout.

2570 E. La Palma Ave., Ste. D, Anaheim, (949) 396-2093; www.asylumbrewingcompany.com

READERS' CHOICE: FOUR SONS BREWING

BEST OF 2017

Food & Drink

BEST BEER SELECTION/ CRAFT-BEER BAR

GOAT HILL TAVERN

Yeah, most people don't think of the Goat as particularly craft-y, what with the sawdust on the floor and rambunctious crowd. But pay attention. With 141 taps, it has most everything, from ciders to sours to daily drink specials.

1830 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, (949) 548-8428, www.goathilltavern.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE AMERICAN DREAM

BEST CRAFT BEER SHOP

PROVISIONS MARKET

Artisan cheeses, fine wines, fresh ground coffee, delicious sandwiches—and beer! Plenty of craft beer—about 30 on tap and more than 500 bottles. Come to Provisions Market to nosh, nibble and imbibe, then take home a few bottles of your favorites.

143 N. Glassell St., Orange, (714) 997-2337, www.provisionsmarkets.com

READERS' CHOICE: BI-TIME WINE CELLARS

BEST WINE BAR

THE ROBBINS NEST WINE BAR & BISTRO

Snug within the madness of DTSA is this airy-yet-warm spot, with a better-than-expected menu and a grand selection of vinos. And gents, the vast majority of customers here are businesswomen, so bring your A game and don't be a creep.

207 W. Second St., Ste. B, Santa Ana, (714) 568-9526, www.robbinsnestwine.com.

READERS' CHOICE: THE ROBBINS NEST WINE BAR & BISTRO

BEST SUSHI

NANA SAN

Goro Sakurai's Nana San has now been open almost a decade. In that time, the sushi master has dazzled fans who followed him from Ango Tei, where he used to work, as well as cultivated new ones who have discovered his omakase. In it, he tops nigiri with carefully made sauces, including a mushroom reduction that's basically a concentrate of umami. All pieces are cut precisely, with an expert understanding that it's not just about how the fish looks on the plate, but also how it feels in the mouth. It should be noted that Sakurai's omakase isn't the cheapest nor is it the most expensive, rather, it is the fairest—the one shining example that a top-notch sushi meal such as this doesn't have to lead to bankruptcy.

3601 Jamboree Rd., Ste. 156, Newport Beach, (949) 474-7373

READERS' CHOICE: SUSHI ON FIRE

BEST SANDWICH

LIL' PICKLE USA

Fifty-five years of serving sandwiches to Orange Coast College students is displayed on photos along the walls. The kitchen preps excellent renditions on all of your favorites: sub, roast beef, club, grinder. But it's the fresh-baked, pillow-soft bread that brings the Lil' Pickle's creations to the next level.

2985 Fairview Rd., Costa Mesa, (714) 979-5522, www.lilpickle.com

READERS' CHOICE: PHILLY'S BEST

BEST FRENCH TOAST

ANEPALCO

Horchata French toast, with a rompope (eggnog) reduction and a healthy dose of cinnamon? Moist and sweet and addicting. Anepalco could easily be the choice in many of the Mexican categories here—but that it wins in French toast shows the talent and dedication that chef/owner Danny Godinez has in all aspects of his restaurant.

3737 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, (714) 456-9642, www.anepalco.com.

READERS' CHOICE: BREAD CRUMB CHANA CAFE

BEST DINER

HARBOR HOUSE CAFÉ

The best diners are open 24 hours, and that's why we gave Harbor House that award, too!

16341 Pacific Coast Hwy., Sunset Beach, (562) 592-5404; also at 34157 Pacific Coast Hwy., Dana Point, (949) 496-8270, www.harborhousecafe.com

READERS' CHOICE: DENNY'S DINER

BEST TACO TUESDAY

HOLÉ MOLÉ

Let's first agree that the measly 20 cents Holé Molé takes off its normally $1.39 asada, carnitas, chicken and al pastor tacos is not the reason you should go to its Taco Tuesday. After all, it only amounts

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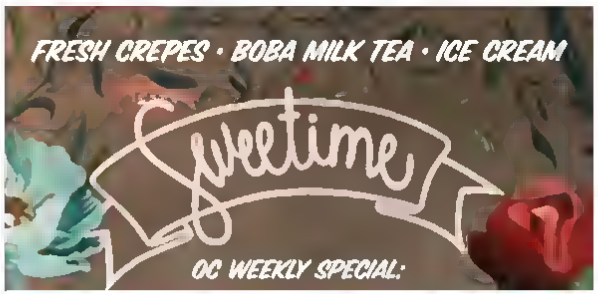
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Food & Drink

to a "Buy 7, Get 1 Free" deal. The fish tacos, however, are another story. They get a 50 cent discount. And that's good because they're the ones you actually want. Not only are the fish pieces individually hand-dipped in batter, then fried into crispy cocoons any British chip shop would envy, but Hole Mole also complements them with a self-serve trough filled with hot-from-the-fryer, spice-dusted, deep-fried yellow chiles that are free for the taking. The chiles are actually available at no cost any day of the week, but because everyone seems to come to Holé Molé on Tuesdays for the discounts, the high turnover ends up making the chiles especially fresh and especially good.

www.holemole.com

READERS' CHOICE: FRED'S MEXICAN CAFE

BEST BREAKFAST

KIMMIE'S COFFEE CUP

You'd never guess this is a burgeoning chain by the quaint, homey environment and cooked-to-order comfort food at each location. There are big stacks of fluffy pancakes, served to you by motherly waitresses who always keep your coffee cup full. Kimmie's is about as close to a home-cooked family breakfast as you can get at a restaurant—*and* you don't have to do the dishes.

www.kimmiescoffeecup.com

READERS' CHOICE: JAGERHAUS

BEST ROCK CLUB

THE OBSERVATORY

DUH

3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600
www.observatoryoc.com

READERS' CHOICE: HOUSE OF BLUES

BEST-LOOKING PATRONS (HOTTEST CROWD)

CLUB BUBBLES

Every Saturday night at Bleu and XO Lounge in Westminster, Orange County's only hip-hop BBW club gets things poppin'. When these voluptuous women hit the dance floor, witness the bounce of every ounce and realize why your plus-size *tia* keeps pullin' in *sanchos*. They're the original thick women of the world who rock endless curves with confidence and too much sexy for one person. We ain't fetishizing these women either; we just appreciate beauty in all shapes, height, weight, age, sizes and gender—unlike the wack mainstream media outlets that are barely coming to realize beauty can't be weighed on a scale. Go slick your hair back with some Suavecito, find a button-up shirt, slacks and your Polo cologne; and go show big girls some love.

Bleu and XO Lounge, 14160 Beach Blvd., Westminster, (562) 264-5643, bbwclubbubbles.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE BUNGALOW HUNTINGTON BEACH

BEST PLACE TO PICK UP A ONE-NIGHT STAND

THE INTERNET

If you're still standing at the bar, hoping to get lucky, you're doing it all wrong. Gone are the days when you spent upward of $100 on drinks just to head to the motel and be disappointed by some wack sex or wake up with some unsightly bumps on your junk. Instead, find someone via the internet: Craigslist, Tinder, Grindr, FERZU, etc., where you can get their pics/stats/test results before even meeting to save yourself all the hullshit. Meet them at your local bar to feel them out, bring a friend if you're nervous, watch your drinks and, if all goes well, handle your scandal, home slice. It might sound sketchy at first, but what's sketchier—knowing all the details about a hook-up prior to smashing, or knowing only their Zodiac sign prior to finding out mid-sex they like to be called "Piggy"?

READERS' CHOICE: BAJA SHADREEZ

BEST VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT

MAI'S KITCHEN

In a county full of pho joints, Mai's Kitchen stands out by cooking meals a typical Vietnamese mother would make. Skip past the noodles and appetizers and flip to the back of the menu, where it says, "Family Dinner." This is where the good stuff is. Here, in a section with no English translations, there are dozens of home-style dishes to choose from, including simmered pork belly with hard-boiled eggs, catfish steaks glazed

in a reduction of soy and fish sauces, and a tamarind-soured broth with chunks of pineapple and tomatoes. Pick among these options to build a communal feast that includes a soup, a vegetable dish and a protein, all served with a big pot of rice for a cost that's cheaper than what you'd pay per person at Chili's.

9039 Bolsa Ave., Ste. 101, Westminster, (714) 839-5883

READERS' CODICE: LSXD

BEST PUNK-ROCK BAR

THE DOLL HUT

Trends come and go, but the Doll Hut remains. Its sticker-covered walls are a Rosetta stone of OC punk history. And even all these years and ownership changes later, it pumps out badass shows every week—and what's punk without four-chord madness accompanied by maniacal drums and sneering vocals?

107 S. Adams St., Anaheim, (562) 277-0075, www.facebook.com/worldfamousdh.

READERS' CODICE: JOHNNY'S SALOON

BEST VODKA

BLINKING OWL DISTILLERY

The SanTana distillery gets oranges from the Heritage Museum of Orange County and uses them to infuse its already great vodka. The result, OC Orange, is something that tastes like a boozy Orange Julius: creamy and refreshing and gorgeous!

802 E. Washington Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 852-3947, blinkingowldistillery.com

READERS' CODICE: TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA

BEST WHISKEY

HI-TIME WINE CELLARS

Three years ago, our Mexican-in-Chief visited Hi-Time Wine Cellars to buy a bottle of whiskey for his wedding. After staring at the offerings in the glass case for hours, he finally asked Mr. Hi-Time for some advice, explaining the importance of a good booze to mark such a momentous day. Mr. Hi-Time directed him to the Yamakazi 18-year-old single-malt Japanese whiskey, promising nothing but good. Every year since, our Mexican-in-Chief takes just one shot to commemorate his beautiful wife and the beauty of life because that's what this vintage represents: silky, sweet, tart and nothing but love. Maybe Hi-Time has it, maybe it's out of stock—it doesn't matter. Ask Mr. Hi-Time to get you one, and it'll be the best gift you can ever buy yourself.

250 Ogle St., Costa Mesa, (949) 650-8463; www.hitimewine.net.

READERS' CHOICE: JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

BEST TEQUILA

HERRADURA

There's a reason why Herradura always got a shout-out in the *comedias rancheras* of Mexico's Golden Age of Cinema—because it was great then, and it's great now. It's Mexico in a shot glass: spicy, complex, profound, *chingon*. And while all of its offerings are great, spring for something rarer and buy the Herradura Reserva 2016 Port Cask Reposado. Aged in port barrels, it exhibits all the strength of Herradura's regular reposado, but tapers off to a beautiful sweetness—*AJUA*!

www.herradura.com

READERS' CHOICE: PATRÓN

BEST BOURBON

HI-TIME WINE CELLARS

Evan Williams is the bourbon world's Prince of the Paupers, a lower-shelf liquor whose base product easily bests the Maker's and Blanton's and whose higher-end creations make Pappy Van Winkle seem as delicious as the sweat that pools on the benches of your local dry sauna. The happy, affordable medium is Evan Williams' single-barrel offerings, and the venerable Hi-Time Wine Cellars buys a barrel every year, then has it bottled with special labels denoting the distinction. This is Evan Williams at its finest—hotter and sweeter and smoother than the competition. Hi-Time and Evan Williams is the best superstar alliance since Stephen Curry and Kevin Durant.

250 Ogle St., Costa Mesa (949) 650-8463; www.hitimewine.net.

READERS' CHOICE: BULLEIT

BEST OF 2017

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Huntington Beach, CA 92647
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BEST OF 2017

Arts & Entertainment

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Thanks for voting THE RANCH Saloon
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OC WEEKLY
BEST OF
READERS' CHOICE
WINNER
2017

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OC Weekly's Best Live Band for 2017

Visit THE RANCH Restaurant located next door,
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BEST ART GALLERY

ARTISTS REPUBLIC GALLERY

Curator Torrey Cook's love for the whimsies of lowbrow art and her embrace of community makes her gallery the place to be. There's always plenty going on here—bands, pins and patches, pop-ups, live art classes—with nary a stuffy piece of "fine art" in the five mini galleries or the larger exhibition space. The move to Anaheim from Laguna has been easier on Cook's pocketbook and gives her room to do more. A maverick in the best sense of the word, and if you need proof, just walk around the second story of the Anaheim GardenWalk and check out Cook's curation and organization of the Artists Republic Mural Garden on the top floor (see Best Public Art).

400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 137, Anaheim, (949) 988-0603, artists-republic.com

READERS' CHOICE: CAL STATE FULLERTON GRAND CENTRAL ART CENTER

BEST ART MUSEUM

ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

We know we pick it every year. And we're doing it again. So sue us.

850 San Clemente Dr., Newport Beach, (949) 759-1122, www.ocma.net.

READERS' CHOICE: BOWERS MUSEUM

BEST CURATOR

YEVGENIYA MIKHAILIK

Irvine Fine Arts Center's Mikhailik likes difficult, expressionistic, abstract work. Her exhibitions and choices in artists are never easy or safe, in fact, sometimes it's just downright puzzling. But her steadfast good taste, trust in an audience she refuses to talk down to, and her championing of female artists equals a class act.

BEST PUBLIC ART

ANAHEIM GARDENWALK

There are too many murals here to count. Okay, there's 17. We counted. (Okay, actually, we took the number off the Artists Republic website.) We did see them all, however, and they're the best, most consistent grouping of public murals in OC, turning the mundanities of mall life—Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., P.F. Chang's, Sunglass Hut, etc.—into something transcendent, Pop-y and cool.

400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 635-7410, anaheimgardenwalk.com

BEST MUSEUM (NON-ART)

BOWERS MUSEUM

Say you had a guest list with Frida Kahlo, the Virgin of Guadalupe, Edward Weston, Ernest Shackleton, Frank Lloyd Wright, Helena Modjeska, Imogen Cunningham and Empress Dowager Cixi. If you did, wouldn't you make sure you went to that party? That's a list of just some of the exhibitions this year. (We left out the Ghana movie posters because, as cool as they are, they aren't people. Duh.)

2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600, www.bowers.org.

READERS' CHOICE: HERITAGE MUSEUM OF ORANGE COUNTY

BEST VISUAL ARTIST

AVERI ENDOW

Endow's picture-perfect paintings give the punk-rock side-eye to everything we hold precious: lambs, children, Twinkies, nuclear blasts, jungle gyms, tater tots, backpacks, those scary monkey toys with the little cymbals and Diane Arbus. The finest details of her pictures reveal the dazzling Lynchian ugly behind the normal AF façade. She sees into our souls. And she does commissions.

averipaints.com

BEST RADIO STATION

93.5 KDAY

West Coast hip-hop gave Southern California a genre that's now part of our DNA, and 93.5 KDAY is the only station you can rely on to actually mix things up a bit rather than simply play what's trending on the charts. It's the only station to regularly play G-Funk or Chicano hip-hop. Sure, it doesn't play much new music, but old-school

OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

Arts & Entertainment

Congratulations to the winners of the Best Of Readers' Poll

The following winners have been voted the best in the Arts & Entertainment category.

Best Art Gallery
CSUF GRANO CENTRAL ART CENTER
714 567.7233
125 N Broadway, Santa Ana
grandcentralartcenter.com

Best Art Museum
BOWERS MUSEUM
714 567.3600
2002 N Main St, Santa Ana
bowers.org

Best Club DJ
DJ BENEFICIAL
facebook.com/DJBeneficial

Best Cosmetic Surgeon
DR. RAYMOND LEE
949 706 2277
1401 Avocado Ave #610, Newport Beach
faceologymd.com

Best Indie Band
MIKE ELDRED TRIO
mikeeldredtrio.com

Best Indie Film Theater
THE FRIDA CINEMA
714 285 9422
305 E 4th St, Santa Ana
thefridacinema.org

Best Instagram Account
@GRUB GODDESS
instagram.com/grubgoddess

Best Karaoke
AZTECA RESTAURANT & LOUNGE
714.638.3790
12911 Main St, Garden Grove
aztecaoc.com

Best Live Band
THE ARNIE NEWMAN BAND
Featuring Francelle
arnienewman.com

Best Local Celebrity
GWEN STEFANI
gwenstefani.com

Best Local Music Festival
LINE TOTALLY 80S FESTIVAL
liketotallyfestival.com

Best Movie Theater
BELLA TERRA
714 897 2533
7777 Edinger Ave, Huntington Beach
bellaterra.hb.com

Best Museum (Non-Art)
HERITAGE MUSEUM OF ORANGE COUNTY
714 540 0404
3101 W Harvard St, Santa Ana
heritagemuseumoc.org

Best Musical Production
HAMILTON
hamiltonbroadway.com

Best New Band
BLUE DEUX
bluedeux.com

Best Night Club
FOUNDATION ROOM @ HOUSE OF BLUES
714 778 2583
400 Disney Way #337, Anaheim
houseofblues.com/anaheim/fr

Best Place for Country Music / Line Dancing
THE RANCH RESTAURANT & SALOON
714 817 4200
1025 E Ball Rd, Anaheim
theranch.com

Best Play
THE BOOK OF MORMON
bookofmormonbroadway.com/tour

Best Politician
KAMALA HARRIS
harris.senate.gov

Best Punk Band
ADOLESCENTS
facebook.com/officialtheadolescents

Best Radio Station
OFZ RADIO
ofzradio.com

Best Rock Band
FLASHBACK HEART ATTACK
eightiescoverband.com

Best Strip Joint
CALIFORNIA GIRLS
714 635 8040
815 S Brookhurst St, Anaheim
caligirls714.com/anaheim

Best Theater / Playhouse
SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS
714 556 2787
600 Town Center Dr, Costa Mesa
scfta.org

Best Venue for Live Comedy
MOLLY BLOOM'S
949 218 0120
2391 S El Camino Real, San Clemente
facebook.com/MollyBloomComedy

Best Venue for Live Music
HOUSE OF BLUES ANAHEIM
714 778 2583
400 Disney Way #337, Anaheim
houseofblues.com/anaheim

Arts & Entertainment

hip-hop is timeless. And ever since Hot 92.3 became a second Power 106, KDAY has become OC's source for its Sunday-night dose of *The Art Laboe Connection*, helping keep alive another era of radio central to the heart of us all. Now if it would just acknowledge our fair county is a large part of its listeners and give one of our DJs a spot on the 1's & 2's (*cough*, inDJnous, *cough*).

www.935kday.com

READERS' CHOICE: 93.9 KDAY RADIO

BEST PLACE FOR SITE-SPECIFIC ART

CASA ROMANTICA CULTURAL CENTER & GARDENS

Though the onetime home of San Clemente founder Ole Hanson has dedicated gallery space and an outdoor amphitheater, the most thrilling work at 1927 Spanish Revival Casa Romantica is created specifically for its every nook and cranny. Enter through the old mansion's keybole-shaped door for dance and theater performances anywhere from a beehive hearth or green-tiled bathroom to its ocean-view terrace and octagonal room, usually timed to take advantage of the changing light of sunset. Casa Romantica's site-specific commissioned pieces are the treasures of its ever-growing cultural programming, which seems to double every season.

415 Avenida Granada, San Clemente, (949) 498-2139, www.casaromantica.com

BEST RAPPER

JONWAYNE

Have you even heard Jonwayne's *Rap Album Two*? Go listen to it front to back before you start crying about our choice because no OC rapper comes even close to delivering the piece of art carefully painted by the La Habra MC. Using the delivery of a battle rapper, the swagger of a homie and the vocabulary of a poet, he carefully crafts flows syllable by syllable, showing you he means it when he says "these words are everything." Jonwayne possesses an old-school MC style that allows him to mesmerize the crowd as he rocks the mic with confidence and endlessly finesses anyone who doubts him.

www.stonesthrow.com/jonwayne

BEST YOUTUBER

8BOOTH

Our local daredevil Anthony "8Booth" Armer might've shattered his feet at the end of last year during a stunt at Table Rock Beach in Laguna, but you'd be a fool to think it was the last we've heard of him. With his newfound infamy, the head of 8booth Productions began focusing on highlighting other daredevils in OC while still releasing stunt videos he made prior to his injuries. But the true heart of the channel is Armer's unvarnished dedication to what he's passionate about, documenting his recovery, including regaining his ability to walk. Remember to "support.your.local.savage" by checking out the latest stunts by his friends, who keep the channel as exciting as ever with plenty of death-defying jumps.

BEST PLACE TO BE RACIST

HUNTINGTON BEACH

It was bad enough March brought us the Saint Marc Pub-Cafe incident in which a young Latina, her sister and friends were asked to show proof of residency before being served. But then came the March 25 Huntington Beach #MAGA-march, which turned into a lovely day of racist slurs, a Kaiser flag, a "Da Goyim Know" sign, Pinochet chants, Hammerskins coming out to play, white nationalists beating up counterprotesters and OC *Weekly* reporters, and a Nazi openly showing off his swastika tattoo. What was the reaction of locals? Throwing away stacks of *OC Weeklys* because we dared reveal white supremacists seemed to feel right at home in Surf City, with no action or even condemnation being taken against the white power losers. Is it any coincidence the local alt-right felt HB was the perfect place to hold a book burning, that anti-immigrant loon Raymond Herrera feels it's the best place to spew his xenophobia, or that white nationalist group American Vanguard chose it as the HQ for its OC chapter? Stay classy, Surf Shitty!

BEST FESTIVAL

EAST END BLOCK PARTY

Nowhere in OC does record-swapping, hip-hop, lowriding, graffiti, funk, punk and indie come together so beautifully in a straight wonderland of modern culture. It's an all-ages, free event that finds subcultures too often separated in the county coming together through the leadership of East End business owners, promoters and venues who make this beautiful event happen. One second, you're moshing to punk in the Top Acid "Way Too Fun Fest" section; the next, you're pop-locking to funk music on the Curious Entertainment side or looking through stacks of records in the Beat Swap Meet. On top of the multiple sections in the festival, the surrounding restaurants, taco trucks and bars make sure you'll get some bomb food to eat and a decent buzz without spending all of your money. Hopefully, the twice-a-year block parties continue long

Best Rock Band

THANK YOU READERS!!
9 TIME WINNER

Best Live Band

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after gentrification turns SanTana into another Silver Lake

BEST POLITICAL COUP

TONY RACKAUCKAS

Imagine a district attorney who protects tainted, wealthy campaign contributors from prosecutions, refuses to charge sheriff's deputies who lie repeatedly on the witness stand because the lies help his office win weak cases, allows underlings to hide exculpatory evidence from juries, promotes deputy DAs adverse to basic ethical standards, and blatantly intimidates judges who won't ignore his misdeeds. Well, you don't have to imagine anything. As has been obvious for years now, this is how Tony Rackauckas runs the Orange County DA's office. What isn't known so much is how four of our five Republican county Supervisors align themselves with his corruption by ignoring reality. In a county with a population larger than 19 states, that's quite a feat.

BEST BEAT PRODUCER

DEZ YUSUF

It's long been confirmed that the future torchbearers of gangsta rap won't be concerned with the same sounds as their forefathers. Just check out the music of Long Beach rap duo Crimewave 5150. Though the combination of gnry street tales and caustic bars presented by JSNMSK and Yusuf are central to their skills as MCs, we have to give Yusuf his due for mashing up elements of the metal and hardcore he grew up listening to while skateboarding through the city streets. Yusuf's beats are the perfect soundtrack to a knock-down, drag-out, hip-hop mosh pit, which the group is famous for stirring up among Long Beach's lit AF millennial hip-hop-heads. If there's one producer whose skills can cross over to audiences on both sides of the Orange County line, it's the guy who knows how to craft a beat that can turn any rap concert into a headbanger's ball.

BEST LIVE BAND

THE FLYTRAPS

There's something to be said for a band that stay true to their name. In that sense, the thick-eyeliner-and-black-leather allure of OC punk band the Flytraps is what draws unsuspecting fans closer to the stage so they can bite their heads off. Sporting a mix of snotty books and slick licks, the band (which started around 2012) provide a sound that offers the catchiness of the Runaways with the raw, animalistic swagger of the Stooges. Members have come and gone since their debut, *She-Freak*, but the core duo of bassist/vocalist Kristin Cooper and guitarist Beth Boyd keep the band fierce onstage, whipping their shoulder-length hair and rattling their bones to the beat of songs such as "Cat Tongue" and "Sunset Strip RIP." Watch out for these ladies to do big things in 2018.

www.facebook.com/pg/The-Flytraps-1431315351088883.

READERS' CHOICE: THE ARNIE NEWMAN BAND FEATURING FRANCELLE

BEST COSMETIC SURGEON

DR. TERRY DUBROW

Any guy smart enough to leave *The Real Housewives of Orange County*, along with his wife/project, Heather, are winners in LIFE.

www.drdubrow.com

READERS' CHOICE: DR. RAYMOND LEE

BEST EXPERIMENTAL BAND

EVAN STONE & THE TRANSLUCENT HAM SANDWICH BAND

It might be easy to guess judging by their name alone, but Evan Stone & the Translucent Ham Sandwich Band aren't just a bunch of local musicians getting together for a show—well, actually, they are. Every gig qualifies as an event, cramming at least a half-dozen members onstage, not counting whatever acrobats, belly dancers or sideshow freaks are joining them that night. For years, they've been known as one of the most visually interesting and musically adept acts in OC. But as with any great experimental band, they're trying to show the inspiration for their music is more than just surface-level. And that's something artists are often afraid to do — which is why we love this kooky conglomerate.

www.translucenthamsandwichband.com.

BEST JAZZ BAND

BD JAZZ DUO

When it comes to musical gamer tributes, BD Jazz Duo are some next-level shit. Combining the forces of guitarist Adam Bellotto and bassist Robby Delosier, the duo puts a jazz twist on theme songs gamers are guaranteed to recognize. A few of Bellotto and Delosier's all-time favorite video games include *Final Fantasy*, *Super Mario*, *Kirby*, *Dragon Quest*, *Duck Hunt* and that Cab Calloway swirl called *The Legend of Zelda*. If you're in the mood for some 8-bit be-bop, you can't go wrong with these guys.

BEST TRIBUTE BAND

SEGA GENECIDE

If wild parties with nostalgic music and raunchy jokes sound like fun, then SEGA Genecide's brand of cheekiness is what you've been waiting for. Their name, an obvious play on the '90s gaming system, is an ode to the music they grew up on and a way to corner the market in the local tribute band scene. Now, they can jam out to Ginuwine's "Pony" or Smash Mouth's "All Star" without a hint of irony and get the dance floor lit off their rediscovered love for pop that defined their middle-school dances.

www.facebook.com/SEGAGENECIDE.

BEST MUSIC VIDEO

"UNDERDOGS"

It's been a big year for HB rapper Yung Pinch. Aside from performing at sold-out shows around the country and landing on OC's marquee hip-hop festival Day N Night, his music-video game is stepping up as well. For proof, look no further than "Underdogs," directed by Cole Bennett. Highlighting the lilting trap beats of the Bluntington Beach bad boy's millennial rap repertoire, it's also a love letter to his local roots, with a side of cartoon surrealism that accents the video of a bleary-eye day and night in the life of the up-and-coming rapper (with a few extra-fine girls thrown in for good measure). While it's not the most ground-breaking concept in the world, the important thing is the vibe and realness with which it illustrates everything we love about this long-haired surfer-looking MC from the 714.

BEST LOCAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

WHEN WE WERE YOUNG

If someone had said at the beginning of the year that the Observatory would throw the best festival of the year in its own parking lot, we would've known that 2017 was going to be a strange year. When We Were Young was a surprisingly flawless weekend full of generations of emo music. Even aside from the expectedly great show from Morrissey, the stacked lineup of everyone from Joyce Manor to AFI to the Get Up Kids delivered with performances both current and nostalgic. Perhaps it was because tickets didn't sell out—or maybe organizers simply learned a lesson from previous festivals—but When We Were Young was easily the best, most comfortable Observatory festival of any genre. Same time next year?

READERS' CHOICE: LIKE TOTALLY 80S FEATIVAL

BEST INDIE BAND

THE BREVET

Their blend of Americana and indie rock is as classic and timeless as it is current, and with the completion of their trilogy of EPs released earlier this year, expect front man Aric Damm and his band to take on the entire indie world.

www.thebrevet.com.

READERS' CHOICE: MIKE ELORDI TRIO

BEST PUNK BAND

T.S.O.L.

While too many of Orange County's amazing punk bands still rest on the records they put out decades ago, T.S.O.L. brought their legacy into 2017 with *The Trigger Complex*. More than 35 years after *Dance With Me* put them on the punk map and decades of iconic records and magnificent tours, Jack Grisham and the rest of the guys are still dissenting just as creatively and intelligently as ever. Add in an electrifying Coachella performance as one of the festival's only punk-rock groups, and there hasn't been a better year for True Sounds of Liberty in quite some time.

www.facebook.com/TSolOfficial

READERS' CHOICE: ADOLESCENTS

BEST OF 2017

Pinup Girl Clothing
90th Anniversary Simplicity
Pickwick Vintage
LA WEEKLY
Dance to Performances by:
JENNIFER KEITH QUINTET
LIZZY & THE TRIGGERMEN
DAPPER DAY EXPO FALL 2017
A MARKETPLACE OF STYLISH LIVING FROM YESTERDAY & TODAY
VINTAGE & CLASSIC FASHIONS HATS SHOES
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NOVEMBER 4+5 SAT 12-7, SUN 10-7
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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5
Step out in style!
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BEST ROCK BAND

THE AQUABATS

Although they haven't been the most active band in the past half-decade, the Aquabats did more in 2017 than they have since the launch of their TV show back in 2012 and have even teased the prospect of new music in the near future. With the state of the world both in and out of the music industry these days, it seems as if we all need a whole lot more of the Aquabats and less of just about everything else. More than 23 years after their crime-fighting debut, the Aquabats are not only the heroes Orange County deserves, but also the ones it needs right now.

www.theaquabats.com.

READERS' CHOICE: FLASHBACK HEART ATTACK

BEST VENUE FOR LIVE MUSIC

HOUSE OF BLUES

Even if there's not many other reasons to visit GardenWalk (see Best Art Gallery and Best Public Art), it's less of a pain to go to a concert here than when the House of Blues was at Downtown Disney. Combine that with the variety of room sizes and venues, the ability to actually eat a decent meal and drink good beer, and the upgraded auditory and visual experiences, and the new and improved House proves second acts do exist in American life. Oh, and did we mention you can park in the structure right next to it and have it validated on the way out? What a novel concept!

400 Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

READERS' CHOICE: HOUSE OF BLUES

BEST HIP-HOP ACT

WEAPONS OF MASS CREATION

Anaheim's Weapons of Mass Creation stand out as a rarity in Juice County. The six-piece band bring live instruments to the local rap scene, creating a sound reminiscent of the Roots. And they keep it all in the *famiha*. Five members are siblings, with the lone holdout, Afro-Latino rapper Solitude, practically being kinfolk. Together, the group weave woke rhymes with relaxed grooves in creating musical conversations about police brutality, identity and feminism. Rapper Joules is another rare jewel—not just as a Chicana in a male-dominated scene, but also as someone with a dual deftness as a rhymer and crooner. More soulful than preachy, Weapons of Mass Creation craft songs of freedom adept to move OC's musical masses in more ways than one.

BEST UNION

NATIONAL UNION OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW) is gaining new members in hospital halls all across OC, and the effort isn't just growing the ranks, but also flexing strength. After hosting an informational picket outside Fountain Valley Regional Hospital, the largest for-profit facility of its kind in OC, the union broke through a months-long impasse and won a new contract this year with pay raises for its workers. But the struggle didn't end there. Dozens donned red NUHW shirts and walked the picket lines soon after, this time against Sodexo, a corporation the hospital subcontracts its food and housekeeping staff with. NUHW also managed to beat back a nasty union-busting campaign in June at West Anaheim Medical Center, adding more workers to its membership rolls in the process.

BEST SUMMER CAMP

ROCK N' ROLL CAMP FOR GIRLS ORANGE COUNTY

The Riot Grrrl-inspired program is five years strong with more li'l campers from ages 7 to 17 ready to rock out every summer. The goal is to put an instrument in the hands of every girl, help them form a band, write a song and perform it live during a big weekend showcase. But rock camp is much more than just a weeklong crash course on how to shred and clang; girls also learn how to make zines, silkscreen their own band shirts and smash the patriarchy with lessons such as "all bodies are good bodies." But the best proof of the summer camp's prowess? Parents won't stop hearing its "Rock Camp Is for Girls" theme song until it's time to enroll again!

girlsrockoc.org

BEST ACTOR

BROCK JOSEPH

There were lots of riveting performances in Brian Newell's adaptation of Michael Shaara's novel about the Battle of Gettysburg, *Killer Angels*, at the Maverick Theater, from Brian Kojac's General Robert E. Lee on the kind-of-loser side to Frank Tryon's Colonel Joshua Chamberlain on the kind-of winning side. But it was Joseph's complicated and empathetic performance as Confederate General James Longstreet, one of the most vilified military names in American history, that was inescapable. Torn between following orders and realizing the futility of the task at hand, as well as the unimaginable carnage to come, Joseph skillfully captured the epic scope of all that transpired by focusing on one of the very real humans at its heart.

BEST ACTRESS

TESSA AUBERJONOIS AND LINDA GEHRINGER

Jen Silverman's dark 2015 comedy, *The Roommate*, is a two-person play and it needs two actresses to elevate it over its fairly mundane situation: a hard-edged city mouse fleeing the big city to find something in a small town in Iowa by moving in with an apparently salt-of-the-earth country mouse. But there was far more to the play than the initial set-up, and far more to each of these characters. Both of these veteran stage performers mined the depths, shadows, nooks and crannies of their characters to near perfection by working in effortless tandem at South Coast Repertory.

BEST OF 2017

BEST PLAY

THE AWKWARD PARTY

Is it fair to give this nod to a play that didn't exist the second before the lights came up, was performed on one night and will never be done again? Probably not, but since director Josh Nichols (and his company, Spectacles Improv Engine) and his seven-person cast succeeded in creating one of the most memorable, entertaining shows on a local stage the past 12 months, screw it. The long-form improv genre is called the Woolf, and the audience members at STAGEStheatre were as essential as the performers, as ideas were solicited from them as they entered the lobby, then filtered to the cast, who were given a simple scenario and generic character types, then told to go balance on a tightrope for 90 minutes without a net. It was brave, unpredictable, exciting and different. And that sounds like something any play, anywhere, should strive for.

READERS' CHOICE: *THE BOOK OF MORMON*

BEST MUSICAL PRODUCTION

PARADE

Full disclosure: The crack(ed-out) reviewing staff of this infernal rag did not make it to this Chance Theater show, set against the backdrop of racism and polarizing politics in 2017—er, 1913ish America. But someone typed about it ahead of time, and it seemed very promising. And according to those who did review it, director Kari Hayter's production absolutely delivered. Raconteurs from the *Orange County Register* and the *Los Angeles Times* to *Broadway World* and *StageScene LA* lavished praise on it, calling the play "richly evocative," "visually arresting," "emotionally arresting," "magnificent," "captivating" and "unforgettable." Can so many people typing about theater *ever* be wrong about anything? We also heard the people who actually paid to see it really dug it as well.

READERS' CHOICE: *HAMILTON*

BEST THEATRICAL ENSEMBLE

MOON OVER BUFFALO

There wasn't a weak link in the eight-person cast of director Amanda DeMaio's staging of Ken Ludwig's door-slamming farce, set in 1953 at a theater in Buffalo, New York. Whether called upon to shamelessly overact (these are actors playing actors, for crissakes), desperately try to plug the holes threatening to sink the traveling troupe, or merely reacting to the madness caused in large part by the roaring ego of the impresario at its center (a masterful Brian J. Cook), the cast excelled at working together by not-so-quietly ripping apart at the individual seams. It was a fun STAGEStheatre show made even

BEST OF 2017

ART & NATURE
LAGUNA ART MUSEUM

A weekend of special exhibitions, a commissioned outdoor work of art, lecture, panel discussion, film, and a family festival on the theme of art's engagement with the natural world

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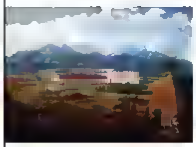
SEASCAPE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2 - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2
Experience the extraordinary installation in the Pacific Ocean by this year's Art & Nature commissioned artist.

IN PERSON: PABLO VARGAS LUGO
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 7 P.M.
The artist discusses his work, including the creation of his commissioned piece for Art & Nature.



CALIFORNIA MEXICANA: LAND INTO LANDSCAPE
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2 P.M.
Panel Discussion with *California Mexicana* curators Katherine Manthorne and Alberto Nulman, *Seascape* artist Pablo Vargas Lugo and historian Steven Hackel, moderated by Malcolm Warner

FILM: THROUGH THE REPELLENT FENCE
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 4 P.M.
This documentary follows art collective Postcommodity as they contruct *Repellent Fence*, a two-mile-long outdoor art work that straddled the US-Mexico border.

KEYNOTE LECTURE: WILLIAM DEVERELL
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 7 P.M.
Renowned California historian and author of *Whitewashed* Adobe delivers the Art & Nature 2017 keynote lecture.

ART & NATURE FAMILY FESTIVAL
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2-5 P.M.
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Arts & Entertainment

more enjoyable by such committed, fearless performers.

BEST THEATER PLAYHOUSE

NEW SWAN SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Yes, the theater founded by UC Irvine professor Eli Simon benefits from close access to the infrastructure, as well as the past and present talent of the university, and to compare its output—two plays and a handful of special events each summer—to those that work year-round might not sound like a fair comparison. And if the New Swan only consisted of its unique space—a 160-seat, three-level, outdoor, mini-Elizabethan theater fashioned into a cylinder from wood and steel—it wouldn't be. But as the Bard his own badass self wrote, the play's the thing, and every production at the New Swan is immersive, compact, talent-laden and entertaining in every way, whether it's a tricked-out 1980s spin on *The Taming of the Shrew* or a gritty tragedy such as *MacBeth*.

Gateway Commons, UC Irvine. West Peltason and Campus drives, Irvine, (949) 824-2787, newswanshakespeare.com.

READERS' CHOICE: SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS

BEST PLACE FOR COUNTRY MUSIC/ LINE DANCING

THE RANCH RESTAURANT & SALOON

With an Oklahoman in charge, you know this Anaheim steakhouse brings out the Stetsons and MILFs in tight jeans looking to reverse-cowboy every which way until the steers come home.

1025 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, (714) 817-4200, www.theranch.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE RANCH RESTAURANT & SALOON

BEST DRAG SHOW

HAMBURGER MARY'S

While guests relax and imbibe cocktails, drag queens strut, writhe, preen, death drop and flip across the Hamburger Mary stage in a manner that puts truth to the long-repeated phrase "Lip-sync for your life!" Whatever flavor of drag you're into—from Broadway divas to hip-hop starlets—each performer brings an alluring persona, with the talent and passion to match. Enjoy a variety of entertainment nightly in a sizable room that ensures a good view no matter where you sit—the better to watch some of the most thrilling queens you've ever seen in the flesh. Don't forget to tip!

330 Pine Ave., Long Beach, (562) 436-7900, www.hamburgermarys.com/longbeach

BEST NEW PLAY

MONSTER BUILDER

Amy Freed is no stranger to the boards at South Coast Repertory, and while her latest play lacked the scope of past ones about Roman Emperor Nero and the weirdo New England Puritans of Increase Mather's time, the central character in her freewheeling dark comedy was just as big: a world-renowned architect and egomaniac graced by brilliance and debased by his warped views on creativity and creating meaning through one's actions (the always-electrifying Danny Scheie). Director Art Manke expertly navigated the play's abrupt shift in tone, allowing Freed's funny, twisted play about the battle between collective community and technocratic, soulless urban planning free rein to roam.

BEST CLUB DJ

DJ INDJNOUS

It wasn't until Richard Rodriguez turned 18 that his parents got him a pair of Technics 1200 turntables, but he has definitely made up for lost time since then. Transformed into DJ InDJnous, a homage to his indigenous Mexican and Guatemalan roots, he's now OC's foremost turntablist. Hip-hop-heads catch him spinning on the regular at the Observatory. The Anaheim resident is the official DJ for Cookbook, Concrete Saints and Ras Kass, all while still holding it down for local OC artists. And DJ InDJnous' scratches on rapper Endz's "714" opens up every episode of our *OC Speakly* podcast, making him a hometown hero for life.

www.facebook.com/inDJnous

READERS' CHOICE: DJ BENEFICIAL

BEST OF 2017

BEST INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

ORANGE COUNTY OUTDOORS

Our fair county may be a growing metropolitan area, but that doesn't mean it's bereft of Mother Nature's beauty. If our concrete jungles make residents forgetful of that, Orange County Outdoors serves as a great reminder. With stunning photos of hidden hot springs by Ortega Highway, bobcats roaming around Black Star Canyon Falls and majestic sunsets by Dana Point Harbor, it's easy to see why Orange County Outdoors has amassed nearly 16,000 followers on Instagram. It's the closest thing we have to a county-centric *National Geographic* page. But don't forget to put the phones down and actually go out and explore some OC nature that Don Bren hasn't developed over . . . yet.

@orangecountyoutdoors.

READERS' CHOICE: @GRUB GODDESS

BEST POLITICAL PROTEST

OC WOMEN'S MARCH

On Jan. 20, Donald Trump officially became the 45th president of the United States. (So much for those damn "faithless" electors.) But the collective moping of the #fucktrump crowd didn't last long, as women led the way the very next day. The Sexist-in-Chief faced a backlash on the streets, with the Women's March on Washington inspiring sister-city demonstrations, including a YUGE one in downtown Santa Ana. Women arrived by the tens of thousands. Together with allies, they swelled the streets to the tune of 25,000, the largest march in OC since 30,000 marched for amnesty in Santa Ana a decade ago. After a historic afternoon of denouncing the Donald, one truth became evident. Pussy grabs back!

BEST POLITICIAN

MELISSA FOX

Having run a warped, money-hungry Irvine political machine that trampled the concept of public transparency and wasted hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, Larry Agran wanted to maintain control over the city's Democrats even after his forced retirement in the 2014 election. But this year, a fellow party member, first-term City Councilwoman Melissa Fox, let the 72-year-old former mayor know she isn't one of his stooges, bucking him on his preferred location for a future veterans' cemetery at the Orange County Great Park site. Most mature individuals wouldn't go ballistic over such a non-dramatic issue, but Agran lost his marbles, questioning Fox's integrity, drumming up disparaging media reports and ranting that his machine will crush her. Geez, Larry. Take a couple of deep breaths before we deliver the worst of the news to you: Now that Fox, a successful businesswoman and attorney, has set the example and isn't afraid of your threats, other honest Democrats will follow her lead.

melissafoxblog.com.

READERS' CHOICE: KAMALA HARRIS

BEST LOCAL CELEBRITY

WILLIAM NGO

It's a testament to Ngo's acting determination that this summer, the product of UC Irvine and Cal State Fullerton turned down an opportunity to audition for an upcoming Sylvester Stallone film. He was already booked for a supporting role in *Boy Erased*, a future production directed by actor Joel Edgerton (*Star Wars: Episode II*, *Zero Dark Thirty* and *The Great Gatsby*) and featuring Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe. Ngo, who is of Vietnamese, French and Chinese descent, left college not knowing what career to pursue and on a whim decided to take acting classes. He's appeared in several dozen commercials, TV shows and movies, including *Grey's Anatomy*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *New Girl*. Much to our delight, we caught him in August performing a skit with boxer Floyd Mayweather and James Corden on *The Late Show*.

www.facebook.com/actorwilliamngo

READERS' CHOICE: GWEN STEFANI

BEST QUOTE

JUDGE THOMAS M. GOETHALS

While announcing he removed the death penalty as a punishment option in *People v. Scott Dekraai* because he can't trust Sandra Hutchens and her Orange

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County Sheriff's Department to act ethically after observing their flagrant cheating in the case for more than four years, the Superior Court judge said, "No agency or individual is above the law."

BEST PROTESTING GROUP

SUMMER OF THE PEOPLE

Anaheim's most recent elections brought about a "People's Council" not lorded over by Curt Pringle for the first time in years. All the while, the city's homeless crisis continued to grow along Skid River and in city parks. Rather than defer to the new council, residents put the pressure on them to find humane solutions to homelessness. They declared a Summer of the People and targeted the big Mouse in town with a sleep-in outside Disneyland. By the dozens, protesters with sleeping bags sounded a call against the theme park's notorious low wages that contribute to homelessness. Disneyland proved people don't have to get on Splash Mountain to get soaked by them when they turned the sprinklers on protesters late into the night. But the event put Anaheim in the international-media spotlight again for all the wrong reasons (see the KKK melee at Pearson Park in 2016, the Anaheim riots in 2012 and the Grand Funk Railroad riot in 1972). The Summer of the People continued with actions against Anaheim's other big attractions—Angel Stadium and the Honda Center—all for being assholes to the homeless.

BEST PODCAST

TWO WRITERS SLINGING YANG

If the name Jeff Pearlman doesn't ring a bell, it should. A *New York Times* best-selling author who relocated to Orange County, Pearlman is one of the nation's top sports biographers. Last year, the former *Sports Illustrated* reporter published *Gunslinger: The Remarkable, Improbable, Iconic Life of Brett Favre*. But Pearlman isn't just a superb writer. His weekly podcast interviews, *Two Writers Slinging Yang*, available

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on iTunes, give listeners welcomed insights into journalism, sports, writing, politics and, well, life. We'd be lying if we didn't admit we also love how he routinely skewers Dana Rohrabacher, OC's senior career politician, on his website CrazyDana.com.

BEST NIGHTCLUB

JP23 BBQ & SMOKEHOUSE

Locals and visitors come for the food, beer and full bar, but they stay for the nightlife, as DJs bump hip-hop, funk, merengue and basically anything that gets gals onto the dance floor. There's a theme for almost every day of the week. Industry Monday, Taco Tuesday, Wing Wednesday, College Thursday, Friday Tap Takeover and Sunday Funday. If you do end up in JP23 during a bar hop through Fullerton, make sure to share a $35 fish bowl with your squad (or don't share).

101 S. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton. (714) 855-5055. www.jp23sports.com

READERS' CHOICE: FOUNDATION ROOM AT THE HOUSE OF BLUES

BEST MOVIE THEATER

THE FRIDA CINEMA

To anyone who would question this selection, we ask you to remember before 2014. That was the year the nonprofit Frida Cinema moved into the Fiesta Twin space on Fourth Street in downtown Santa Ana. Pre-Frida, you could count on one hand how many Orange County moviehouses experimented with obscure, challenging and decidedly non-mainstream film titles. Okay, so even with the Frida, you don't need a second hand to count on. The point is, the Frida, its fearless leader Logan Crow and his dedicated staff of card-carrying film nerds not only showcase the newer indie, foreign and art-house flicks the large theater chains and second-run operations ignore, but they also champion them with their hearts, souls and bloodshot eyeballs. The Frida also clumps together multiple screenings to pay tribute to filmmakers, from Hitchcock to Jodorowsky. Those who came of age after great films left the cinema circuit and only saw them on small screens have been able to see them on the big screen thanks to the Frida, which also welcomes other programmers to present one-off, flashback and shadowcast (think *Rocky Horror*) showings. It stops on the dime to honor the recently departed, as was done with the Sept. 24 showing of the new film *Lucky*, starring Harry Dean Stanton. Sadly, it's a bare-bones operation in constant fear of fading away like old film stock. That's where all of us movie-lovers come in, lest we return to those dark days of "before 2014."

305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana. (714) 285-9422. thefridacinema.org.

READERS' CHOICE: CENTURY HUNTINGTON BEACH AT BELLA TERRA

BEST NEW BAND

BUNDY

Taking cues from bands such as Built to Spill and Pinback, Bundy temper their dark lyrical content with melodic breaks and pop-forward arrangements, letting audiences come up for air once in a while as they bob their heads to a dancey four-on-the-floor beat. On songs such as this year's "Holy Vultures," singer/guitarist Nani Serna's floating guitar and David Byrne-reminiscent vocals nestle well with the rhythms of bassist Kelsey Hoover, drummer Derek Cookmeyer's sturdy pulse and guitarist Johnny Lim's vibrant energy. With an impressive showing at this year's Buskerfest, we see big things for this killer band (just don't bold their name against them).

www.bundytheband.com

READERS' CHOICE: BLUE DEUX

BEST INDIE FILM THEATER

THE FRIDA CINEMA

Here is a movie theater that's excited to be a movie theater. For each film series, for each major screening event, the Frida revamps the lobby with film-specific props and decorations. For the David Lynch film series, theater staff arranged stacks of free doughnuts (à la *Twin Peaks*) on tables along the room; for a screening of *The Room*, they hosted a costume contest so one of the patrons could be crowned "favorite customer." For especially spooky films, the Frida even rents out Sunnyside Cemetery for a screening under the stars. It's this sense of community that makes the Frida feel like we're in high-school film club all over again.

305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana. (714) 285-9422; thefridacinema.org.

READERS' CHOICE: THE FRIDA CINEMA

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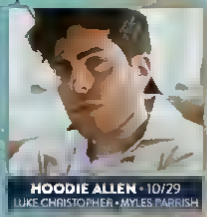

HOODIE ALLEN • 10/29
LUKE CHRISTOPHER • MYLES PARRISH

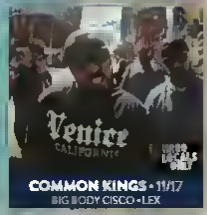
BUCKETHEAD • 10/31
WITH BRAIN AND BREWER

OH SNAP! IT'S A '90S HIP HOP PARTY • 11/4

$UICIDEBOY$ • 11/10

LUPE FIASCO • 11/11

EASTON CORBIN • 11/12
TEMECULA ROAD



COMMON KINGS • 11/17
BIG BODY CISCO • LEX

BLUES TRAVELER • 11/18
LOS COLOGNES

BELANOVA AND MOENIA • 11/19

THE MAINE • 11/24
DREAMERS • NIGHT RIOTS

THE DEAR HUNTER • 12/2
THE FAMILY CHEST • VAVA

BRANDI CARLILE • 12/13

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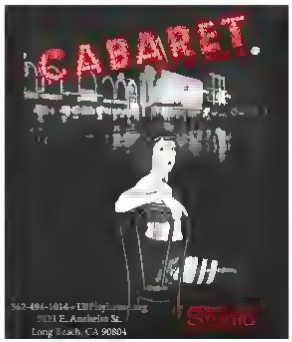

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BEST STRIP JOINT

VENETIAN GENTLEMEN'S CLUB

The place sets its classy atmosphere with cool lighting, then follows with legit-good food and drinks at great prices. You almost forget this is a gentleman's club—then the gals with the #chichischrist and #nalgamedios start doing their thing. Don't forget your dollar bills!

1421 N. State College Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 808-8500. www.venetiangc.com

READERS' CHOICE: CALIFORNIA GIRLS

BEST VENUE FOR LIVE COMEDY

ANCHOR BAR

Hidden in a corner of the Newport-Mesa Back Bay is Anchor Bar, this nautical-themed dive hosts comedians both aspiring and accomplished each Monday, offering an open mic and a chance to "show me what you got." Hosted by local funny guy Evan "The Cass Man" Cassidy, it's free to perform and attend. So grab a beer or three and go support live comedy in OC—the more you drink, the funnier they are!

2675 Irvine Ave., Costa Mesa, (949) 574-4935.

READERS' CHOICE: MOLLY BLOOM'S IRISH BAR AND RESTAURANT

BEST RECORD LABEL

PORCH PARTY RECORDS

The name says it all. Porch Party Records began on a porch. Long Beach artists and music-lovers hanging out, partying, sharing tunes and

BEST OF 2017

ideas. As with so many great musical enterprises, what started as a casual nexus of creativity evolved into a full-on record label in 2013, hosting an array of local indie artists and ensembles. Founder Casey Terrazas made sure the company never lost sight of its roots. Though Porch Party Records no longer has a porch, the parties have merely moved into the front yard and into the house. It's still common for visiting artists to crash on a couch for a while, and the community surrounding the label remains both open and intimate.

www.porchpartyrecords.com.

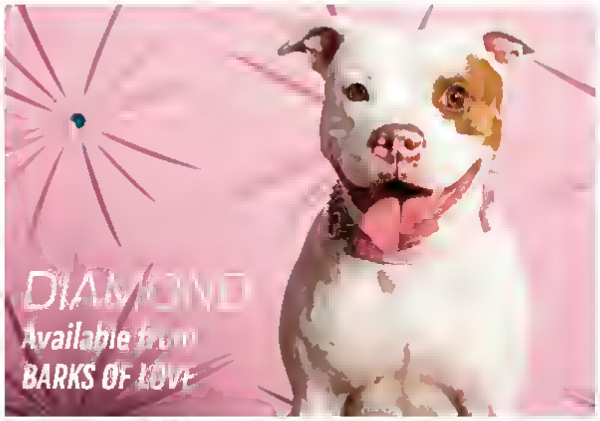
BEST KARAOKE

KOPA ROOM AT LINBROOK BOWL

If Huell Howser loved this place, so should you!

201 S. Brookhurst St., Anaheim, (714) 774-2253, www.linbrookbowl.com.

READERS' CHOICE: AZTECA RESTAURANT & LOUNGE



BEST JOURNALIST

FRANK JOHN TRISTAN

One of the trickiest questions facing any reporter is how do you get to the center of the action of a story without *becoming* the story? The implied moral judgment is that a good reporter should never allow him- or herself to become part of the story. But this notion too often allows so-called journalists to step away from the events happening before them so that, in an effort to remain neutral and objective no matter the situation, they end up producing stories that lack perspective. One reporter who already knows the difference is *OC Weekly*'s former intern and current contributor, Frank John Tristan. Although he came to the *Weekly* with a background in music and culture that has led to incisive reporting on the county's punk, hip-hop and graffiti scenes, nothing could prepare the 22-year-old for what happened in March, when a pro-Trump rally attended by various alt-right and neo-Nazi protesters suddenly turned violent, and the fascists began targeting *Weekly* photographer Brian Feinzimer. Tristan intervened to protect his colleague and got beat on by a fat fuck, then a white supremacist, all while California State Park Peace Officers did nothing. Despite the chaos of the moment, Tristan provided the definitive account of the melee. Though it was initially dismissed as fake news by the world, it ended up drastically changing the media coverage of the event that followed and forced the Orange County district attorney's office to drop charges against four of five antifa wrongfully arrested that day. If journalism has a future, let's hope it involves the type of guts displayed by Tristan—we need more reporters like him.

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1725 College Ave., Santa Ana
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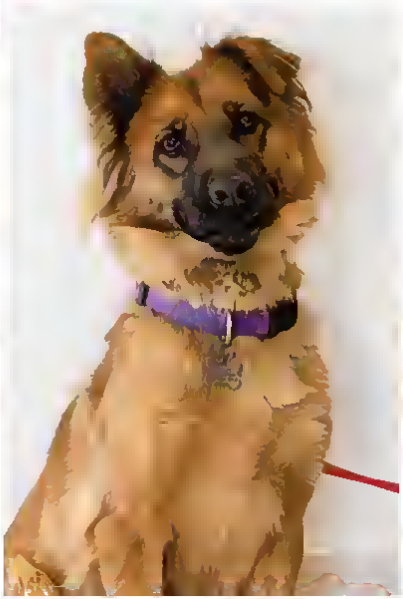
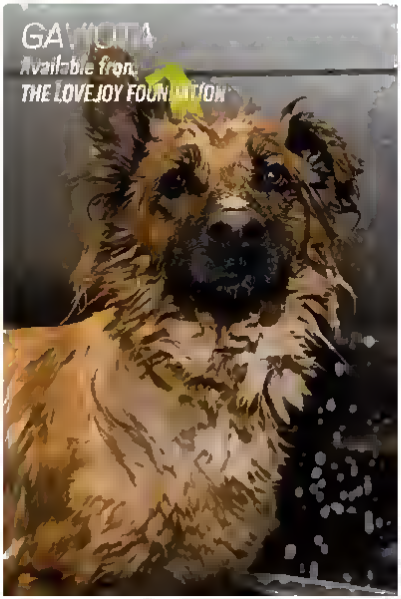
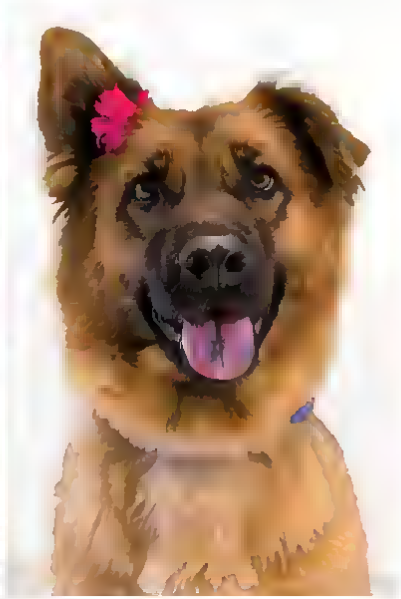






BEST MASSAGE

THE SPA AT THE GLEN

Nestled between Nordstrom and Sears at the Brea Mall, its inviting ambiance of trickling streams and tranquil colors make this day spa a gateway to serenity before massage therapists even begin their work. And speaking of that tension burrowed within, the Glen offers four ways to relaxation, including heated stones, prenatal, cozy couples and custom. Whether for 50- or 80-minute sessions, let skillful massage therapists slacken the stresses of the day; for $25 more, they'll get into the deep tissue. Afterward, take a dip in a hot tub or, better yet, lounge in the cozy solarium, where a fireplace and high-arched ceilings make it hard to leave—really hard!

1001 Brea Mall, Brea, (714) 990-2030
www.thespattheglen.com

READERS' CHOICE: BUBBE WILLIAMS DAY SPA

BEST TOURIST ATTRACTION

IN-N-OUT BURGER

We all know Disneyland brings more tourists to OC than anything else. But even the House of the Mouse doesn't get as much love as In-N-Out. Many Southern California expats and even celebrities such as Anthony Bourdain brag that the first thing they do after landing here is grab a double-double, animal-style, or whatever their favorite item is. You never hear that sort of nostalgia for Pirates of the Caribbean, amiright?

Various locations, www.in-n-out.com

READERS' CHOICE: DISNEYLAND

BEST PET STORE

HEALTHY SPOT

There should be more to a pet store than just food and toys. At Healthy Spot, you can get those, sure, but you also have access to an award-winning grooming department, small-dog daycare, anesthesia-free teeth cleaning, and a partnership with Tully's for group or one-on-one training. The main focus is dogs and cats, but let's be honest, if you have an iguana, fish or parrot, you already have your go-to spot for those supplies. The staff at Healthy Spot are knowledgeable and care deeply about every pet that comes through the door. Plus, the store is well-maintained, with clean, real grass outside to relieve your pet, and it doesn't smell like a barn (we're looking at you, Petco).

1580 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, (949) 877-0350, healthyspot.com

BEST AUTO DEALERSHIP

CREVIER CLASSIC CARS

If the fanciest thing you've ever driven is a 1999 Toyota Camry, it's easy to not think about Crevier Classic Cars. But its stunning showroom of automotive history near John Wayne Airport is a great place to get those #goals going. Donnie Crevier started with a 1931 Ford Model A truck; today, he counts a 1911 Hudson Speedster, '57 Ford Thunderbird convertible and '69 Chevy Camaro in his collection. The classics are great to gawk at, and more than a few are up for sale—provided you make a li'l more than a journalist.

3658 Clinton St., Costa Mesa, (714) 426-0238, www.creverclassiccars.com

READERS' CHOICE: FLETCHER JONES MOTORCARS

BEST PLACE FOR SHOPPING

ANAHEIM INDOOR MARKETPLACE

Anaheim Indoor Marketplace boasts it has everything under one roof—and it's true! Each weekend, *la naranja*'s Mexicans roam its aisles for deals on classic Vans, Stetsons, *quinceañera* dresses, Pepe Aguilar CDs *y más*! The swap meet first opened in 1990 with only 20 vendors. Now, with Anaheim's *raza* as a majority, it's become the largest—and grandest—indoor swap meet in all of OC. The marketplace also knows how to entertain shoppers: The food court offers tacos from Miguelitos and hearty slices of pizza, and weekends bring baile folklorico, mariachi and banda groups to an outside stage. All that, and great bargains just a mile away from Disneyland? That's how Anaheim rolls!

1440 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 999-0888, anaheimmarketplace.com

READERS' CHOICE: SOUTH COAST PLAZA

BEST MECHANIC

DUNCAN AUTO SERVICE

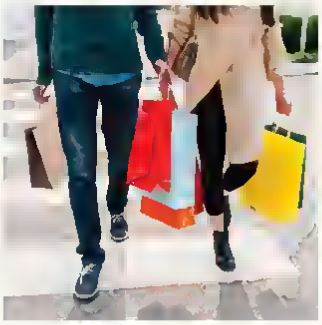
Gregg Duncan and his team (which includes his son Brian) have never steered us wrong. Roll up to the shop, and the Duncan crew will assess the situation, and get you back on the road quickly and with money still in your wallet.

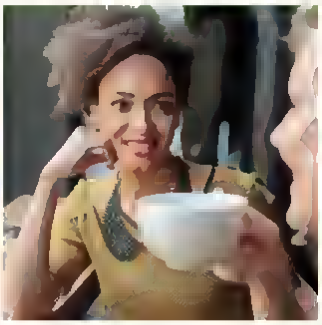
2172 N. Batavia St., Orange, (714) 283-3059

READERS' CHOICE: LINT AUTOMOTIVE

BEST OF 2017

SHOP. DINE. PLAY.





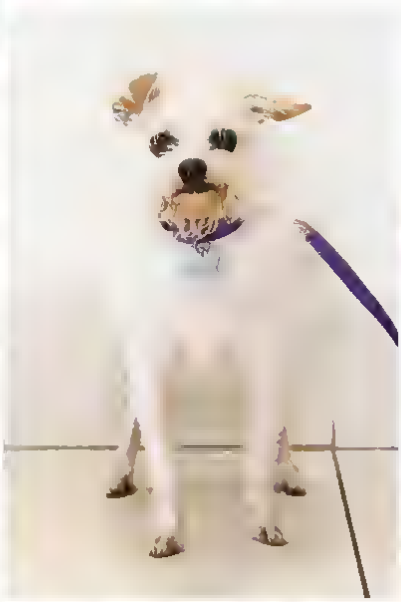
ACTIVE RIDE SHOP
AMERICA'S BEST CONTACTS & EYEGLASSES
AMERICA S TIRE COMPANY
ASHLEY FURNITURE HOME STORE
BARNES & NOBLE
BATH & BODY WORKS
BEN & JERRY'S ICE CREAM
CARL'S JR
CARTER'S BABIES & KIDS | OSHKOSH B'GOSH
CHARO'S PERUVIAN CUISINE
CHICK-FIL-A
DAVID'S BRIDAL
DEL TACO
DXL MENS APPAREL
EDWARDS LONG BEACH STADIUM 26
EL TORITO
EUROPEAN WAX CENTER
FALLAS PAREDES
FANTASTIC SAMS
GNC
GOWIRELESS
GS-LOVE
IN-N-OUT BURGER
ISLANDS FINE BURGERS & DRINKS
JUSTICE JUST FOR GIRLS
LANE BRYANT
LOWE S
LUCILLE'S SMOKEHOUSE BAR-B-QUE
MASSAGE ENVY
MICHAELS ARTS & CRAFTS
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
NUVISION OPTIX/OPTOMETRY
OLD NAVY
ORIGINAL ROADHOUSE GRILL
ORTHO MATTRESS
PANDA EXPRESS
PARTY CITY
PERFORMANCE BICYCLE SHOP
PETSMART
PHENIX SALON SUITES
PIER 1 IMPORTS
PIZZAREV
ROASTING WATER
ROSS DRESS FOR LESS
SAM'S CLUB
SPRINT PCS
STARBUCKS
SUPERMEX
T-MOBILE
T.G.I. FRIDAYS
TC CAR WASH
THE GOOD FEET STORE
THE NAIL SPA
TILLYS
TOTAL WINE & MORE
ULTA BEAUTY
VALVOLINE INSTANT OIL CHANGE
WALMART

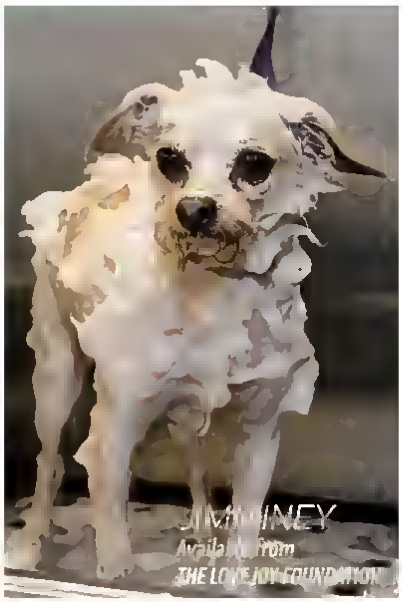
LONG BEACH
TOWNE CENTER

FACEBOOK.COM/LBTOWNECENTER LONGBEACHTOWNECENTER

7575 CARSON BLVD, LONG BEACH, CA 90808 | LONGBEACHTOWNECENTER.NET

Shopping & Services





BEST WEDDING VENUE

BALBOA BAY RESORT

It's historic, it's updated, and it's on the beach—what else do you need? Offering six reception sites that fit a range of 150 to 450 guests, a personal event-planning service, and specialized menus to choose from, the Balboa Bay Resort knows how to do your special day right. Sure, it's pricey—but that's why you should only marry once.

7221 W. Coast Hwy., Newport Beach, (888) 894-7288, instagram: @balboabayresort.

READERS' CHOICE: THE HACIENDA

BEST HOTEL

BLUE LANTERN INN

Perched on not only some of the tallest, but also most historically significant oceanfront cliffs in the area, the Blue Lantern Inn offers guests breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, coastline and hundreds of boats docked at Dana Point Harbor marina. Massachusetts student Richard Henry Dana, who sailed up the California coast in 1835, memorialized the geographic features towering above these beaches as a romantic spot. Built in a Nantucket style, the inn offers 29 rooms, each with a fireplace, sizeable baths and the ambiance of a classy resort that larger, cookie-cutter hotel properties up and down PCH often can't deliver. A bonus is a staff that seems genuinely eager to make stays enjoyable. When you aren't in your room, there are plenty of local adventures: sailing, surfing, whale watching, fine dining and hiking. Or take a 10-minute trip up the coast to explore Laguna Beach. Rates currently range from $210 to $625.

34343 Street of the Blue Lantern, Dana Point, (949) 661-1304, www.bluelanterninn.com

READERS' CHOICE: HYATT REGENCY HUNTINGTON BEACH RESORT AND SPA

BEST LAWYER

SARA W. ROSS

If you didn't intentionally kill another person, but the government is determined to put you in prison for the rest of your life as a murderer, you're going to need someone as skillful and dogged as deputy public defender Sara W. Ross to represent you. That line isn't hype. Earlier this year, Ross won a long-shot, three-year battle to overturn Cole Wilkins' 2008 first-degree murder verdict. He had accidentally killed an off-duty California Highway Patrol officer when a stolen stove fell off the bed of his truck and into oncoming traffic. Battling against elite prosecutors who treated her with contempt, Ross convinced a judge that egregious government misconduct in the case warranted punishment. When the DA retried Wilkins, he wasn't allowed to use the "felony murder rule" that holds a criminal liable for any death occurring during the commission of a major crime, even if unintended.

14 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, (714) 834-2144, www.pubdef.ocgov.com

READERS' CHOICE: CHRIS GLEW

BEST PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

CAMERON JACKSON

It's not just A-list Hollywood celebrities or ultra-wealthy individuals who call Orange County private investigator Cameron Jackson when they need help. Your average husband or wife who suspect their partner of engaging in extramarital affairs know Jackson is particularly skillful at discovering the truth, often producing supportive money-shot pictures from the shadows. Through his C. Jackson Investigations, he has conducted detailed opposition research on multiple dirty politicians throughout Southern California. In the past decade, criminal defense attorneys have hired the 2005 UC Irvine graduate, who once worked as a San Diego cop, to aid in winning at least seven federal and state court not-guilty verdicts for their clients. When a birthright manhoodwinked a Vietnamese woman into marriage, then disappeared, Jackson tracked him around the U.S. and across the globe, walking up to the dude as he sat in a small karaoke bar in a village 50 kilometers outside of Saigon.

4340 Von Karman Ave., Ste. 370, Newport Beach, (949) 887-5388, www.cjacksoninvestigations.com

BEST HOLY PERSON

THE REVEREND DR. PAUL TELLSTRÖM

Lord only knows why, but Orange County attracts religious leaders who like to buy multiple mansions and travel by chauffeured limousine or private jet. In espousing their so-called "gospel of prosperity" during their 1990s heyday, Trinity Broadcasting Network's Jan and Paul Crouch didn't think twice about renting separate luxury hotel rooms for their two Maltese dogs. We thankfully celebrate the Reverend Dr. Paul Tellström, the senior

BEST OF 2017

minister at Irvine United Congregational Church, as a counterweight to the self-serving, televangelism embarrassments Tellström believes aiding our community's poor and marginalized is the noble mission of his church During a late May sermon, standing in a historic hotbed of Christian conservatism, he challenged President Donald Trump's budget proposal Don't kid yourself, he said, cutting health care, Meals On Wheels programs, education, environmental protections and assistance to nations struggling with famine in exchange for a larger stockpile of tanks and additional tax cuts for the ultra-wealthy is a lousy moral choice

Irvine United Congregational Church 4915 Alton Pkwy., Irvine (949) 733-0220, iucc.org

BEST COMIC BOOK STORE

BIG RED COMICS OC

Located in Old Towne Orange, the store's staff is friendly and well-informed, the selection of books thorough, and all of the bread-and-butter stuff that actually makes money (statues, toys, etc) thoughtfully stocked. But what brings us back is the discount trade bin. With no more room left in our dingy apartment for those pesky white boxes housing our collection, we now avoid single issues and look to the paperback compilations. Big Red offers them at better-than-reasonable discounts, a recent haul included copies of Brian K Vaughan's *Ex Machina*, one of countless iterations of *X-Men*, J.M. DeMatteis' *Blood. A Tale,* and several compilations of Grant Morrison's run of *JLA*. Our geekery was satiated without putting us in the poorhouse

162 N. Glassell St., Orange (714) 650-0813

READERS' CHOICE: COMICS TOOBS N' TOYS

BEST CAKE SUPPLY SHOP

THE CAKEWALK CAKE & CANDY SUPPLIES

Walking into the unassuming shop in an Orange strip mall is akin to entering nirvana for bakers. This location of Erik and Lauren Martinez's baking-supplies empire carries all you'll need: cake pans, cupcake liners, cookie cutters, frosting couplers and more. You'll find along the shelves nearly every color of fondant and frosting you could dream up. Chocolate pearls, gum-paste flowers, edible glitter . . . It's all here. And if you have no idea what any of that is, but you're intrigued, the Redlands-based chain offers weekly classes in just about everything. Do they allow Yanks on *The Great British Bake Off*? After you clear the shelves, go find out.

3432 E. Chapman Ave., Orange (714) 602-6461, www.cakewalksupplies.com.

BEST BEAD SHOP

OC BEADS

Millions of beads, baubles and gems from all over the world displayed in tiny dishes or strung up on the walls make shopping here more like a museum visit. OC Beads has 25-plus years of experience and offers custom designs with semi-precious stones and pearls, amber and wood, glass and gold. The staff will supervise while you make repairs with their tools, or they'll do it for you. And classes on the basics ranging from wire-wrapping and weaving to Japanese bead knotting and vintage braiding cater to all levels. OC Beads survived three moves due to Dana Point's constant refiguring of Coast Highway and Del Prado, but now it owns the building and there's free parking out back.

34181 Pacific Coast Hwy., Dana Point, (949) 248-2000 www.ocbeadstore.com.

BEST BIKE SHOP

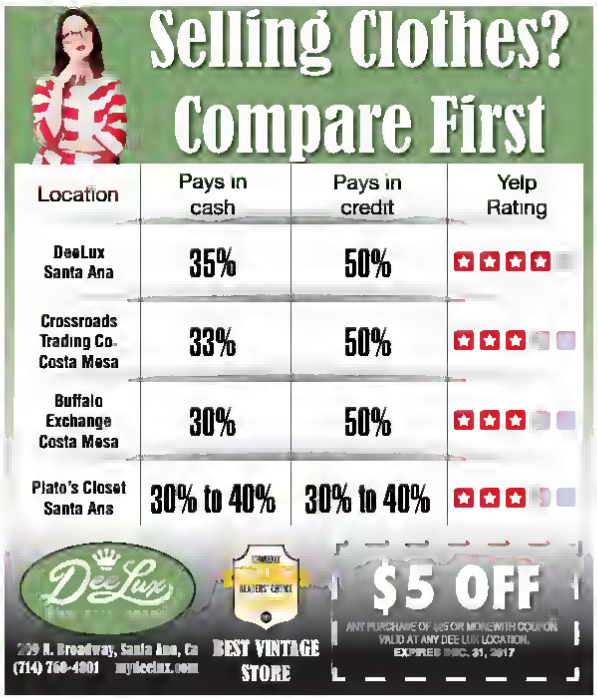
BUY MY BIKES

If you like your old bike and it still fits, it's worth fixing; if you don't and it doesn't, get a new one. That's the kind of practical advice you'll get at this full-service shop. Since 1978, goofball owner Jeff Curwood has dressed up in a bee costume for low-tech commercials promising shoppers won't get stung, and he has generations of return customers who consider themselves part of the hive. Curwood's team loves bikes from beach cruisers to Precuum BMX to Electra electrics and Detroit build-your-own models. Plus they've donated bikes for raffles supporting just about every school and church near them. And that's what all the buzz is about.

32302 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 493-5611 buymybikes.com.

READERS' CHOICE: BUY MY BIKES

BEST OF 2017



Shopping & Services

BEST NURSERY

MOON VALLEY NURSERIES

Larger-than-life sculptures are strategically placed among the nursery's inventory, lining the 405 freeway from Sand Canyon to Jeffrey Road and entertaining bored northbound commuters. A gape-mouthed T-rex and a brontosaurus grazing the treetops started it all, then every week a new surprise: a giraffe joined the munching brontosaurus and a dolphin leaping over a hedge. Moon Valley grows and guarantees all its trees, and the bigger boxed ones they plant for free. Founded 30 years ago by Les Blake in Moon Valley, a Phoenix neighborhood, with the then-radical notion of "You buy it, we plant it," the nursery hasn't stopped growing. Or marketing. While airplanes flying ad banners over the beach are a little much, the freeway menagerie makes up for it, big time.

6500 Alton Pkwy., Irvine (949) 768-2449, also at 21251 Bushard St., Huntington Beach (714) 508-4821 www.moonvalleynurseries.com

BEST HAIR REMOVAL

THE LITTLE WAXING STUDIO

A cozy, enclosed room in Old Town Tustin is all Sandy Sandino needs to work her magic. From proper brow shaping to full-on Brazilian, she's professionally trained to groom all the hair that's fit to wax. Eyebrows in particular are treated to a combination of waxing and tweezing for a precise finish. Bonus: If you also need your hair and/or nails done, you're already in a salon!

Inside Salon Gallery, 220 El Camino Real, Tustin (714) 290-1383 www.littlewaxingstudio.com

READERS' CHOICE: EUROPEAN WAX CENTER

BEST USED-BOOK STORE

BOOKMAN

Times are tough for brick-and-mortar bookstores, what with Amazon doing its best to emulate the ravaging hordes of Genghis Khan in its attempt to dominate the world. But things are still going strong at this Orange used-book store, which somehow manages to cram more than 300,000 books into its 6,000-square-foot store and warehouse. While genuine bibliophiles know nothing beats browsing through the aromatic stacks, looking for unexpected treasure, you can do an online search by title, author or keyword on the store's website, as well as order online. Books are generally sold at half the cover price, and it also offers a cool buy-back program. Basically, you get up to one-third of the price that the Bookman can sell your book for, good for store credit that can be used to pay for up to half of a Bookman purchase.

840 Tustin St., Orange (800) 538-0166, www.orange.ebookman.com

READERS' CHOICE: BOOKOFF USA

BEST MANICURE/PEDICURE

EXQUISITELY NAILS ON THE GO

You can go to a dedicated nail salon or even a beauty shop that has a manicurist on site. But to feel like a VIP, head to Phenix Salon Suites and ask for Kim. Loyal customers have followed Kim Duong to this one-woman business wherever it lands. Expect a peaceful atmosphere, except when Duong requests your feedback on how the mani/pedi is looking. She'll even offer you sweet and savory snacks. Be sure to call for an appointment, though, Duong doesn't take walk-ins.

Inside Phenix Salon Suites, 1835 Newport Blvd., Ste. 101, Costa Mesa, (714) 227-2863

READERS' CHOICE: PARDON MY FRENCH NAIL BAR & BEAUTY LOUNGE

BEST MALL

SOUTH COAST PLAZA

Celebrating 50 years in business is a rare accomplishment, yet this OC destination has changed with the times (like not calling it a word that rhymes with *mall*). High-end retailers are aplenty, but there's a definite mix of affordable and trendy brands. Kidlets know the good stuff is consolidated to street level toward the carousel, but creative types will head across the street for an extensive home-goods selection. And South Coast Plaza's restaurants remain as forward-thinking as when the Segerstroms did nothing but farm lima beans.

3333 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 435-2000 www.southcoastplaza.com

READERS' CHOICE: SOUTH COAST PLAZA

BEST OF 2017

I'M SHORT ON TIME, BUT VERY, VERY LONG ON LEGS.

YOUR FIRST WAX IS FREE*

ONE WAX IS ALL IT TAKES TO FALL IN LOVE.

12 ORANGE COUNTY LOCATIONS

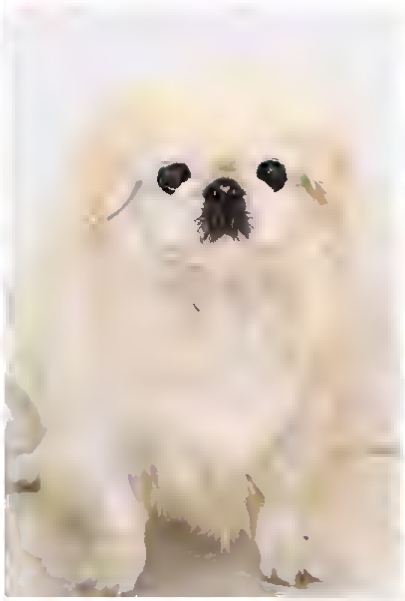
WAXCENTER.COM | europeanwax

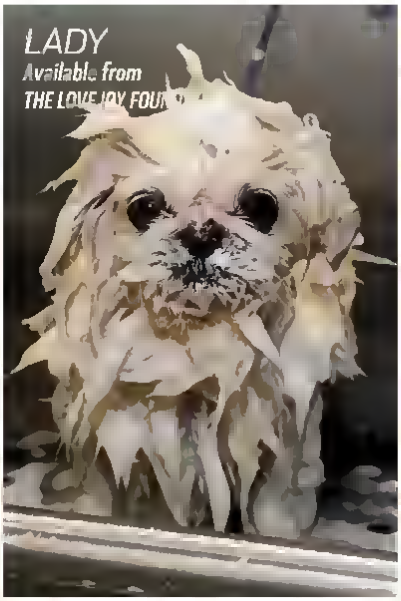
REVEALING YOU.
REVEALING BEAUTIFUL SKIN®

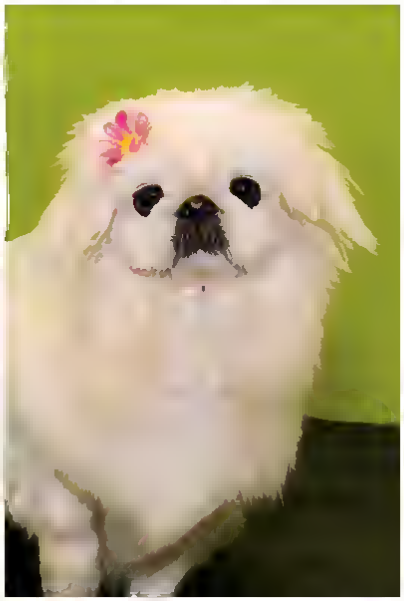
EUROPEAN WAX CENTER®

Offer expires 2/14/17. First time guests only. Valid on [illegible] and location may vary. Please visit [illegible]

Shopping & Services







BEST BOOKSTORE

LIBROMOBILE

Sarah Rafael García's tiny bookstore popup in a stairway between Alta Baja Market and 4th Street Market offers affordable books by writers of color; bilingual and Spanish books for children, youth and adults, as well as books that speak to culture and social-justice issues relevant to the local community. And thanks to generous donors, Libro-Mobile is always stocked with a mix of new, collectible and curated used books for every reader.

201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (657) 205-8907, www.libromobile.com.

READERS' CHOICE: BARNES & NOBLE

BEST ARCADE

MISSION CONTROL

Located on the second floor of McFadden Public Market is Mission Control, a barcade filled with classic arcade consoles from the 1970s, '80s and '90s along with pinball machines such as *AC/DC*, *Indiana Jones* and even a newer *Batman* mashup in which you get to fight Heath Ledger's Joker. With a rotating selection of craft beers, fine cocktails and bites from the eateries downstairs, it's a coin-operated gamer's haven—and before you know it, you've spent all your laundry money getting lost in the glowing tables trying to beat that high score.

515 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (657) 232-3338, www.mcfaddenmarket.com/arcademissioncontrol

BEST LIBRARY

NEWPORT BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

The rich are different from you and me. They read. In addition to reading, they attend one of the best library speakers' series in Southern California at the architectural marvel that is the central branch of the Newport Beach Public Library. From the outside to the inside, you're invited to read lavishly, as calming greenery surrounds the library and the glass architecture allows you to enjoy it without stepping out. This book depot offers you selections for kids, teens, young adults and seniors from biographies to fresh magazines and newspapers. The library has a built-in espresso bar, complimentary wifi and an outer patio. Enjoy a book, a coffee or both, or just take a nap outside.

1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, (949) 717-3800, www.newportbeachlibrary.org

BEST DOWNTOWN

FULLERTON

Although SanTana gets a lot of the credit for revitalizing its own downtown, Fullerton's had a solid one going for years before. With a wide array of music venues and stores, ranging from the rocking Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen to the horns section at Mo's, DTF keeps the scene alive after being one of the birthplaces of OC punk decades ago. Of course, it also has all of the bars, restaurants, shopping and other services—including the excellent Classic Tattoo Parlor—you'd want and expect in a city with some serious cultural history. Just ignore the slack-jawed 909ers, and you're golden!

READERS' CHOICE: DOWNTOWN SANTA ANA

BEST RECORD/CD STORE

BLACK HOLE RECORDS

The legend: a crazy amount of punk, classic rock and a mixture of oddities. There's also no record store in OC (or possibly the world) with as extensive a collection of costumes and insane clothing choices. Additionally, the one-man encyclopedia you'll find working the counter can tell you anything you need to know—and more—about nearly any record you pick up.

198 N. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, (714) 449-1788, www.facebook.com/blackholerecords1986

READERS' CHOICE: LEFT OF THE DIAL RECORDS

BEST SKATE SHOP

PROGRAMME SKATE & SOUND

While many skate shops have begun shifting to cater to an online crowd, Programme nails the best of both worlds by serving their far-reaching web following without sacrificing the intimate community feel of a neighborhood shop. Whether you're a veteran skateboarder looking for new threads and shoes or a novice who needs a new, complete setup, the staff here are knowledgeable and friendly enough to get you whatever you need. Oh, and the place also happens to host awesome local punk and hardcore concerts, too.

2495 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton, (714) 786-7565, programmehq.com.

READERS' CHOICE: CONTENDERS BOARDSHOP

BEST OF 2017

TROPIC TAN

VOTED BEST TANNING SALON IN OC

OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

Orange County Favorite For Over 35 Years

Infrared Bodywraps
Red Light Therapy
Custom Spray Tanning

www.tropictantustin.com

Magnolia CAR WASH

Fountain Valley
18020 Magnolia St.
At Talbert Ave
714-965-4990

OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

WE WON!
Best Car Wash In OC!

$5.00 OFF
Any Turbo or Platinum Package
Reg $23.99 & up
$5 Off Turbo | $5 Off Platinum | $5 Off Turbo
Larger Vehicles May Cannot be combined with any other offers. Expires 11-30-17

Celebrate Your Birthday With Us!
FREE Wash for Driver with Valid ID.
No Catch!

We Salute 10% You! EXTRA DISCOUNT
Teachers, Nurses & Servicemen

Dogs Smiling for Dog Reasons
waggish
GRACE CHON & MELANIE MONTERO
@THEGRACE CHON @THESAFEDOG
TURNS OUT YOU CAN BUY HAPPINESS.
"It's a rare dog indeed in a book, folks."
- Modern Dog Magazine
"These dogs are champions."
- Woman's Day Magazine
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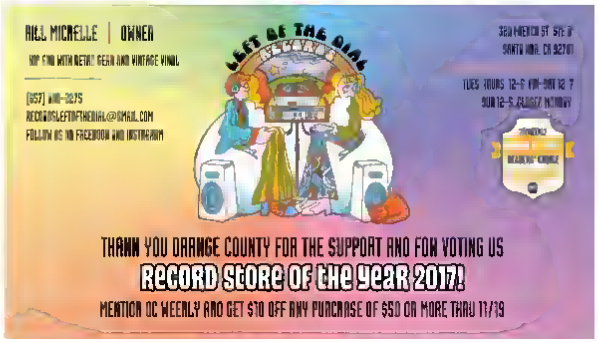
AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS AND EBOOKS ARE SOLD
amazon.com BARNES & NOBLE INDIEBOUND


BILL MICHELLE | OWNER
LEFT OF THE DIAL
RECORDS
THANK YOU ORANGE COUNTY FOR THE SUPPORT AND FOR VOTING US
RECORD STORE OF THE YEAR 2017!
MENTION OC WEEKLY AND GET $10 OFF ANY PURCHASE OF $50 OR MORE THRU 11/19

PARDON MY *french*

nail bar + beauty lounge

OCWEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

VOTED BEST MANICURE & PEDICURE

OC WEEKLY SPECIAL

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Shopping & Services

BEST VAPE SHOP

CROWN VAPORS

Great customer service and a wide selection of juices are just two of the many reasons to visit this Garden Grove spot. Since 2014, years before vaping became a thing, it has been serving dedicated customers with top-shelf cartridges and batteries. Sample the latest flavors in a spacious, comfortable showroom, or kick back on one of the couches while you choose your juice. Crown Vapors is also a great place to go if you're just starting out in the vape game because everyone here is super-patient and will get you going with all the right equipment.

Crown Vapors, 13471 Magnolia St., Ste. B, Garden Grove, (657) 400-8054, www.crownvapors.net.

READERS' CHOICE: E-CIG GALLERY

BEST TATTOO PARLOR

GOLD RUSH TATTOO

With new tattoo parlors popping up on every corner, it's hard to judge which of the hundreds is technically the best. But Gold Rush Tattoo is one of OC's few shops with actual history; owner Colin Dowling can tell you stories for days about the legendary artists who have come in and out of the shop. Current artists Joel Bones, Lindsey Carmichael, Brynne Palmer and Marc Jackson are each masters of their own styles, with enough diversity and experience to handle just about any tattoo you could want. As an added bonus, the shop offers weekly Walk-In Saturdays, so you don't even have to make an appointment to get inked by some stellar artists.

1779 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, (949) 646-7874, goldrushtattoo.com

READERS' CHOICE: PACDUCO TATTOO

BEST LIQUOR STORE

HI-TIME WINE CELLARS

This infernal rag has deemed Hi-Time the best liquor store in the county every year except two dating back to 2009, according to online archives. When another joint was named—likely the result of since-abandoned Best Of rules dictating that winners could not have won the same category the year before—Hi-Time was named best something else. And the Costa Mesa booze barn was still mentioned in the write-up of one of those other best liquor stores. The point is: Our permanent residency in the bowels of Hi-Time has resulted in so many extinguished brain cells that we are incapable of masking the stone-cold-sober fact that Hi-Time Wine Cellars is simply the best fucking liquor store in all of Orange County, not only for its voluminous selection of the Devil's drink, but also for its unique gift aisles, stupendous cigar humidor and wonderful wine-tasting bar. An especially helpful staff—composed largely of family members—guide you through the amazing maze.

250 Ogle St., Costa Mesa, (949) 650-8463; www.hitimewine.net.

READERS' CHOICE: SOCAL WINE & SPIRITS

BEST SURF SHOP

TK'S FROGHOUSE

Sure, if all you want out of a surf shop is a place to buy boards and wetsuits, OC is chock-a-block with them. But if you're looking for a shop with the personality and culture that has made the surf community stick together for the past several decades, there's only one option. For as suburban and rich as most of Newport Beach is now, the old-school surf culture is still there with the Froghouse. Much like how Blackie's is the bar for those yearning for the days when Newport was more about surfing than real estate, the Froghouse is a jam-packed trip through time to the era of OC's peak surf culture.

6808 W. Coast Hwy., Newport Beach, (949) 642-5650

READERS' CHOICE: JACK'S SURFBOARDS

BEST ADULT STORE

CONREV

There's a reason why the word *revolution* is included in the name of this sexy retailer. The mature-merchandise mainstay (with multiple locations in Orange County and Long Beach) is hep to new advances in the adult-products industry, reflected in its recent inclusion of CBD massage oils and lubes. But

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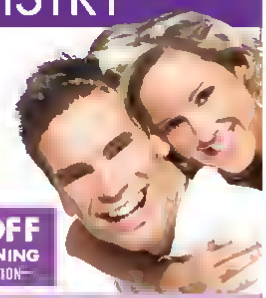

Shopping & Services

even if you're still tip-toeing past the edible underwear stage in your sex life, there are plenty of manuals and how-to guides on taking your erotic encounters to the next level, as well as toys, plugs, whips, candy, rings, gags, riding crops, masks, BDSM items, vibrators, games and foreplay kits for the varsity leaguers. Find yourself among a panoply of gorgeous lingerie, body stockings, cutesy nipple covers, colorful 'kinis and raver-type one-pieces, or browse among the assortment of serious pleasure tools and creative massagers. If you like sex, you'll find yourself picking something up in no time

1777 Newport Blvd., Ste. B, Costa Mesa, (949) 646-1967 also at 17855 Beach Blvd., Huntington Beach, (714) 843-6911 and 401 S. El Camino Real, Ste. D, San Clemente, (949) 366-9577

READERS' CHOICE: SPROBY'S ADULT EMPORIUM

BEST PLACE TO GET PIERCED

BARBELLA STUDIOS

Originally in Fountain Valley, Barbella Studios moved to Costa Mesa in 2005 and has perforated skin there since. The front end looks more like a clinical office than a body-modification studio, but the backroom—where piecing happens—has a wildly different, punk-rock vibe, with framed paintings of monsters (most of it by resident piercer Stephen Von Frankenstein, with whom you can have the best conversations about Prince ever) hanging from purple and yellow walls. Barbella strives to give clients the optimal experience at every visit, with highly trained piercers who are as friendly as they are modified and can help cure any prepiercing jitters with confidence. Following each session, you're educated on aftercare and gifted a helpful pamphlet and free saline to treat your new hole.

1793 Newport Blvd., Ste. A106, Costa Mesa, (949) 673-9959, www.barbellastudios.com

READERS' CHOICE: TOMMY T'S BODY PIERCING

BEST USED-CLOTHING STORE

DEELUX

Dave and Dee Brown's Orange County wing of their recycled-fashion store continues its ongoing reign of supplying the most eclectic variety of preloved clothing, arduously curated for those not seeking to follow trends, but to look and feel their best wearing something atypical. It's a buy/sell/trade store, with new items arriving daily, so you'll need to visit obsessively to capitalize on the freshest threads from designer, vintage and modern retailers, plus new apparel and seasonal styles. Whatever occasion you need a new wardrobe for—back to school, festival season, a seasonal refresher—come in, they'll make your butt look good.

203 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, (714) 760-4801, mydeelux.com

BEST SWAP MEET

GOLDEN WEST SWAP MEET

From *lonchera* tacos to antiques to 99-cent DVDs to a fresh pack of undies for $3, the Golden West Swap Meet has it all. It's less chichi than the product fair at the Orange County Fairgrounds and has better junk to dig through than most other community-college-hosted swaps—sorry, Cypress College!

15744 Goldenwest St., Huntington Beach, (714) 892-7711, www.goldenwestcollege.edu

BEST VINTAGE STORE

SWELLEGANT

For every grown person who still loves playing dress up, Swellegant carries a large array of vintage clothing to choose from at its tightly packed, bright-blue brick-and-mortar shop. Categorized by theme, style and color, you can mix and match ensemble pieces, as well as find some of the most random, outlandish garments ever constructed for a human body. But it's not all garish and out-of-vogue stuff; there's still plenty of contemporary wardrobe items, T-shirts, jewelry and accessories to wear in your day to day, plus tchotchkes, hats and even wigs to make you feel as if you walked out of *The Women* (the George Cukor one, not the shitty Meg Ryan remake). Owner/retro-fashion maven Nicole Bernstein has carefully collected and sold vintage clothing from her Newport Beach store since 1997, making Swellegant a welcome break from the plethora of bougie, on-trend boutiques around town. Best part: You'll usually find her gleefully sitting behind the counter with her flaming-red, Lucy Ricardo hair.

3409 Newport Blvd., Newport Beach, (949) 673-3604, www.facebook.com/SwellegantVintage

READERS' CHOICE: DEELUX

BEST OF 2017

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Shopping & Services

BEST FURNITURE STORE

SALVATION ARMY FAMILY STORE

The venerable charity's Eastside Costa Mesa location consistently has one of the largest inventories of quality furniture in OC. Fresh deliveries daily sprawl across the parking lot and into a good portion of the store. Grab yourself a deal on an antique cabinet or IKEA Kallax that someone else sacrificed their sanity for and already built for you!

2126 Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa. (949) 642-3636. www.salvationarmyusa.org

READERS' CHOICE: HOUSE TO HOME FURNITURE

BEST DRY CLEANERS

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1245 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 542-8428

BEST COSTUME STORE

GASOLINE ALLEY

Orange used to house a few mom-and-pop costume shops, but just one remains. Gasoline Alley, tucked in the corner of a tiny strip mall. It's a treasure trove overflowing with theater-quality costumes and authentic vintage pieces. Most items are available for both rent and purchase. Its selection of well-made pieces will make you never want to buy a costume out of a bag at Party City ever again.

3804 E. Chapman Ave., Orange. (714) 639-8550. www.gasolinealleycostumes.com

BEST CLOTHING BOUTIQUE

BUFFALO EXCHANGE

The Buffalo Exchange is more of an anti-boutique, but it allows poor bastards such as us to afford boutique goods, so it's best in our book. Whether your idea of a boutique is on-trend items from Tory Burch or a vintage store that sells one-of-a-kind pieces, the Buffalo Exchange is stuffed with eclectic, fashionable wares sure to suit your tastes. Buying used clothing is good for the environment, too, keeping them out of the landfill and money out of the evil fast-fashion industry. Plus, the stores went bag-free years before it became the law, as the company's all about helping you mind both the environment and your wallet.

2930 Bristol St., Ste. A108, Costa Mesa. (714) 825-0619; also at 215 N. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, (714) 870-6855. www.buffaloexchange.com.

READERS' CHOICE: JASPER PLUM

BEST BARBERSHOP

EL CATRÍN BARBERSHOP

With its red-white-and-blue striped pole, Suavecito pomade, and razor shaves, El Catrín Barbershop embodies true *santanero* culture. The Old English *sigo* in front telegraphs for visitors the Chicano-culture feel inside. El Catrín (Spanish for "the dandy") not only offers clean cuts and fresh fades, but also camaraderie, fueled by a flat-screen that either plays oldies but goodies on Pandora or screens stoner comedies. Best of all: After years of being a walkup-only spot, customer demand became so great it now offers online appointments.

400 W. Fourth St., Ste. B, Santa Ana. (714) 558-8948. barberiaelcatrin.com.

READERS' CHOICE: GOOD FELLAZ BARBER SHOP

BEST APARTMENT COMPLEX

URBAN VILLAGE APARTMENTS

This Long Beach collection is steps away from the beach, and residents have access to the resort-style swimming pool, fireplace and spa area. There's an outdoor kitchen and community grills from which you can enjoy barbecues with your family and best *amigo/as*. Throw in a 24-hour gym and complimentary bike rental, and it's the ultimate place to exercise your homebody-ness.

1081 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach. (844) 466-7221

READERS' CHOICE: AVALON COMMUNITIES

BEST BODY SHOP

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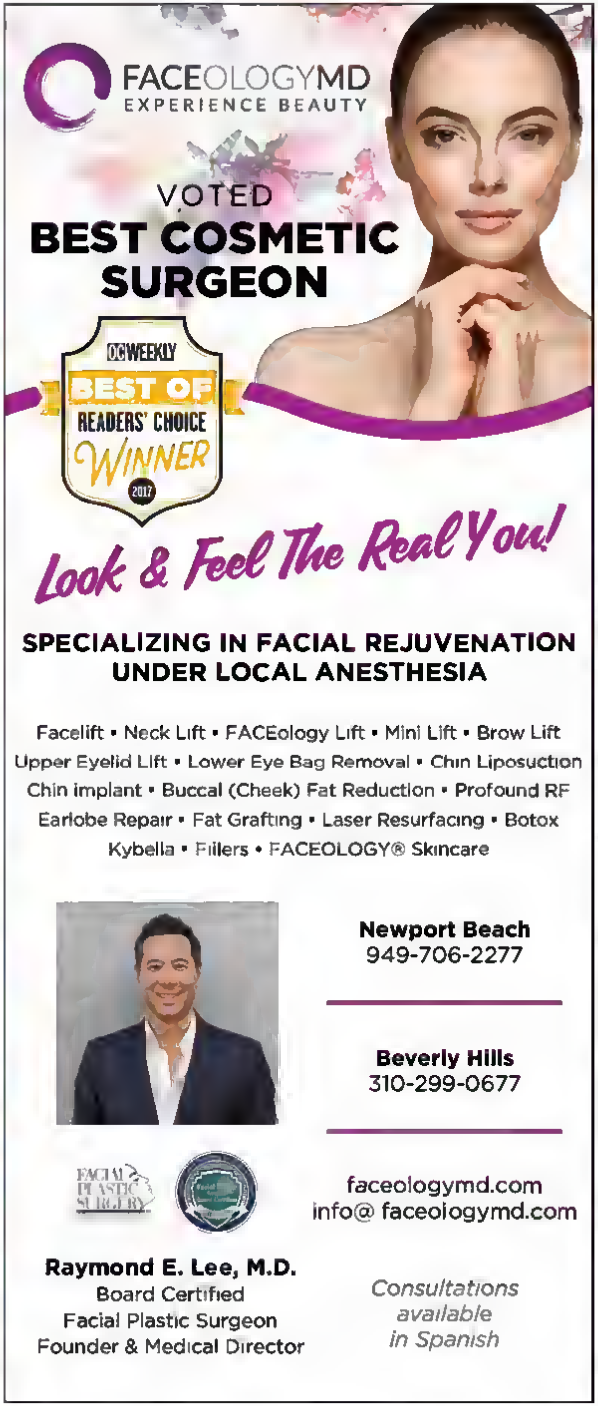
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Express They both won this award last year, and they are who our Mexican-in-Chief turned to after someone dented his beautiful 1979 Ford F-150 Supercab He called the mothership, who told him to take it to Bodyworks Express since it was a relatively minor job. There, one of the workers immediately told him that they don't work on vintage cars—but what a beautiful car! He then suggested a competitor just down the street, who worked out wonderfully And that is a true Best Of winner a business so confident in its abilities that it's more than happy to give business to others and share the wealth. Plus, its commercials continue to be the most cherished local TV ads since those of the late, great Paul's TV & Appliances

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EADERS' CHOICE FOUNTAIN VALLEY BODYWORKS

BEST CAR WASH

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There's nothing worse than your date (or dog) throwing up in your car There's also maybe nothing as embarrassing as having a traveling landfill as a vehicle, either Thankfully, Padilla Mobile Detailing has you covered—and it comes to YOU The prices are reasonable considering how great its team makes your motor-coach shine and smell. But Padilla transcends other car washes with its excellent customer service. Mario—Mr Padilla himself—is on point with communication and gets the job done in a timely manner, as in his crew shows up when he says it will.

(714) 391-6488

READERS' CHOICE, MAGNOLIA CAR WASH

BEST OF 2017

NATCAT

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Shopping & Services

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Opening a tanning salon in San Clemente is like opening a bourbon bar in Louisville—you better bring your best game, lest the locals laugh you out of town. And this mini-chain's San Clemente outpost brings it, using spray tans on bodies the way Rodin worked clay.

111 W. Avenida Palizada, San Clemente, (949) 229-2757, www.broadwaybronze.com

READERS' CHOICE: TROPIC TAN

BEST BAIL BONDSMAN

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1313 W. Civic Center Dr., Ste. 3, Santa Ana, (714) 550-0563, www.1stprioritybailbonds.com

BEST E-LIQUID

NAKED 100

The very best of high-end vaping. Signal Hill-based company the Schwartz makes a yogurt-flavored vape that doesn't disappoint: Go Nanas, one of several fruit-smoothie-themed options, tastes like banana taffy. There are strong notes of cinnamon that balance the sweet banana and spicy tobacco flavors well. The cinnamon is unexpected, but pleasant, much like finding money in the washer.

(714) 373-3075, www.facebook.com/theschwartzaliquid

READERS' CHOICE: BANEO JOO

BEST OF 2017

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The following businesses are recognized as rescue dog sponsors. Their full page ads in this issue allowed the following dogs to be featured, in hopes that they'll all find loving homes.

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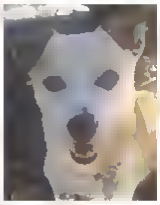
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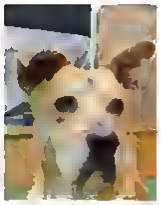
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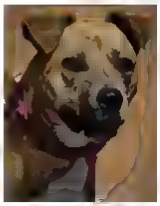
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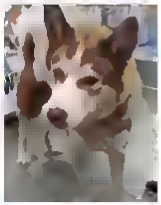
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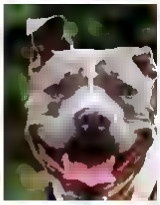
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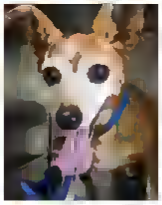
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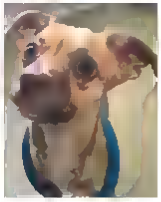
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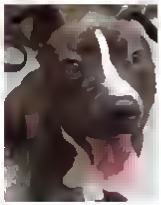
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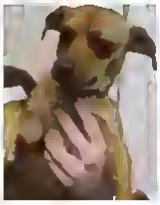
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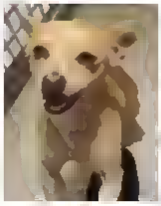
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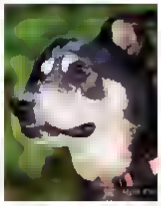
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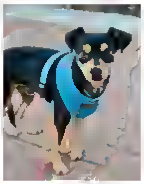
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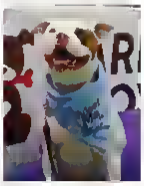
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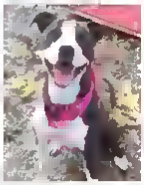
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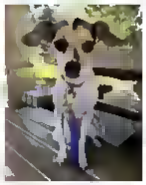
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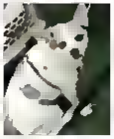
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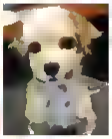
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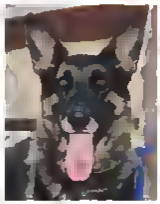
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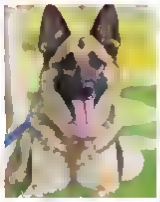
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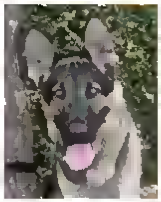
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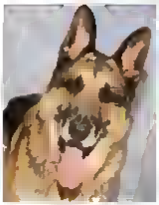
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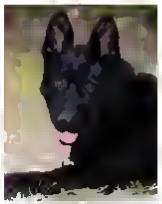
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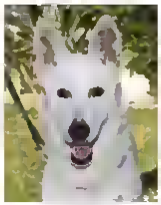
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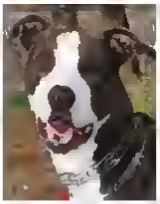
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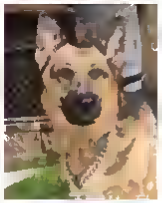
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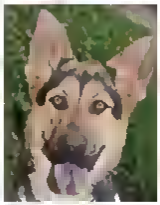
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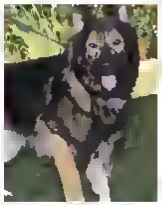
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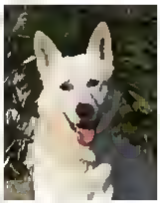
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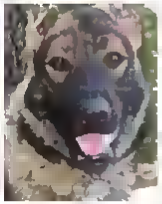
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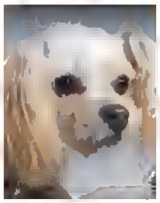
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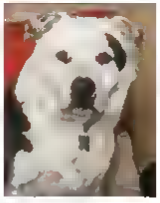
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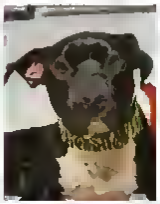
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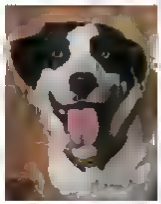
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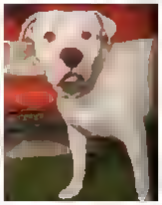
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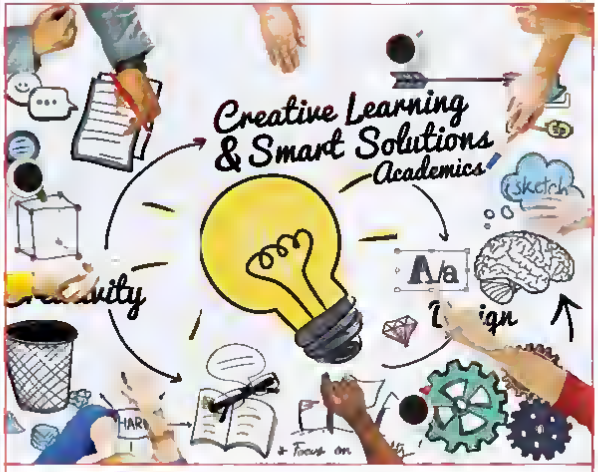

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ENHANCE YOUR DEGREE

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS ALONE ARE NO LONGER ENOUGH

Last November, LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner made waves when he told Recode's Code Enterprise conference that skill training, rather than educational degree achievement, should be the focus for employers and graduates.

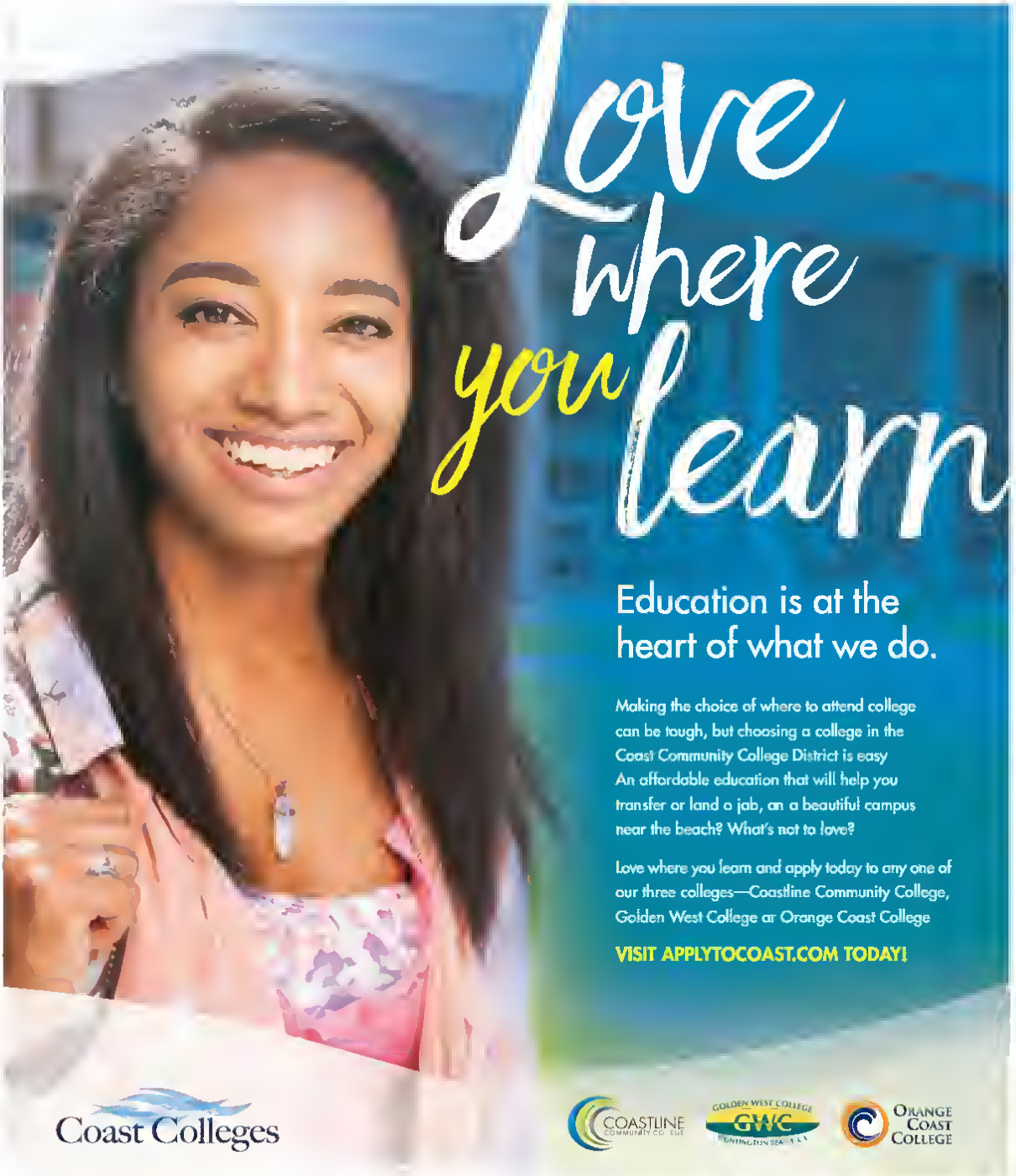
"We would do much better if we stopped ensuring that everyone had to have a four-year degree to get certain types of jobs and started being open to the fact that there's a much broader array of talents and skills and perspectives and experiences that people can be successful," Weiner said in his Recode interview in San Francisco. With the cost of attending four-year college hitting a record high in 2016 (averaging $24,610 for attending an in-state public university, according to the College Board), we spoke to two education and careers experts to gain insight into the ongoing "skills vs. degrees" debate.

"When I interview candidates, I don't ask about the school they attended or what their GPA was," wrote Mark Beal, Managing Partner of public relations agency Taylor and a Professor at Rutgers University, in his book 101 Lessons They Never Taught You in College. "Instead, I focus solely on the work experiences they had in college. You can never have too much experience."

America is experiencing a glut of degrees. The number of U.S. bachelor's degrees awarded increased by an incredible 34 percent, from 1.4 million to 1.9 million, between academic years 2003-04 and 2013-14, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. This proliferation may partially explain why, for the first time, four-year college graduates comprise a larger portion of the workforce that those with a high school diploma (but no degree), rather than this statistic solely indicating any new importance placed upon academic qualifications by employers.

But America's employment landscape has also fundamentally shifted since the Great Recession of 2007-2009. While the number of jobs may have bounced back following that epic economic downturn, they are not the same jobs that were lost. A 2016 report by the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce concluded that while the recession decimated low-skill blue-collar and clerical jobs, the economic recovery added mostly high-skill managerial and professional positions.

"Over 95 percent of jobs created during the recovery have gone to workers with at least some college education, while those with a high school diploma or less are being left behind," wrote the report's authors.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The concurrent rise in digital information storage and automation only amplified this phenomenon, with 1.4 million office and administrative support jobs lost during the recession and recovery. Especially in certain career fields – including law, finance, marketing and more – degrees remain highly prized, if not absolutely required. But academic qualifications alone are unlikely to get someone hired.

"Based on the jobs we see posted, hiring managers still very much value a bachelor's degree. It's required on most of the job listings we see at FlexJobs," said Brie Weiler Reynolds, senior career specialist at FlexJobs. "What I think will help any job seeker is to not only have that bachelor's degree, but also to have specific work experiences (internships, co-ops, etc. all count) as well."

With so many job candidates now holding degrees, doing so may simply be expected by many hiring managers (while lacking a degree may be more of a red flag to recruiters than ever before). The shift over recent years seems to be that employers want to see not only a bachelor's degree on a resume, but also tangible evidence of an applicant's higher-level work experience. So for today's graduate job seekers, it's about setting themselves apart with their achievements outside of pure academia.

"When comparing two candidates with the same bachelor's degree, hiring managers are prioritizing the relevant experience the applicants secured via internships while in school or immediately after graduation," said Beal. "It's one of the reasons why I am seeing a growing trend in university graduates take on internships immediately after graduation."

Hiring managers can also afford to refine their selection process to take into account not only "hard" technical skills and experience, which can be easily imparted on a resume, but also those harder-to-convey "soft" skills and talents which are nonetheless invaluable in a real-world workplace.

"It's really a combination of both," Reynolds explained. "I think hiring managers initially look for those hard skills to make sure someone can do the job. But then they start thinking about how hiring this person might benefit the company in the long run, and that's where soft skills come into play. Someone with leadership skills, great communication, and collaboration skills is likely going to yield long-term benefits."

America's higher education system has to some extent responded to a post-recession employment market which craves more well-rounded workers.

"I am seeing more universities placing emphasis on exposing students to the real-world scenarios of business," said Beal. "At Rutgers University, where I teach, I see more adjunct professors who bring the real-world demands of business world into the classroom and

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I also see a proactive approach to create opportunities for students via internships and on-the-job experiences through career services departments."

"I think higher education institutions and businesses can both do a better job of working together to prepare college students for those first jobs out of college," said Reynolds. "The best situations are those where businesses and colleges develop relationships, allowing students to have up-to-date classroom learning and real-world experiences throughout the completion of their degree."

America's universities will need to continue to evolve in their ability to offer students a combination of both relevant course work and opportunities for real-world work experiences, Beal explained.

"If students can study and receive on-the-job experience as early as their freshman year, they will be well prepared to secure a position in the industry they pursue around the time they graduate," he said. "Aside from course work, we all need to continue to learn and transform so that we can evolve in our career. The onus can't just be on the university we attend ... The student needs to take ownership of their own unique journey from college to a career."

CULINARYLAB

BRAND STORY

Pursuing a career in culinary arts may seem like a lofty goal, but CulinaryLab, a culinary school located right here in Orange County, is here to help aspiring cooks make that dream a reality. Featuring both professional culinary and pastry school programs, students will find a more contemporary hands-on approach to education. With a 12 to 1 student to teacher ratio, top-notch chef instructors, and apprenticeships at local restaurants, students are able to hit the ground running and pursue their wildest culinary aspirations.

CulinaryLab treats its kitchen like a laboratory where students get to experiment with different ingredients and techniques so they fully understand the science behind how food works. Covering topics such as knife skills, seafood fabrication, plating and photography, International cuisine, and more, students have a variety of programs to choose from. Lengthy textbooks and yawn-inducing lectures are replaced with tech-savvy digital learning and hands-on kitchen demonstrations. Students can expect to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty immediately as they embark on their journey to becoming an industry professional.

Orange County native Chef Ryan Wagner is the Founder and Chef Director of the cooking school. With 20 years of food industry experience under his belt, Chef Ryan comes from a background of running restaurant kitchens, high-profile event catering companies, and culinary startups. A self-proclaimed "food geek," Chef Ryan has even made a couple of appearances on the Food Network. After spending a number of years as the Lead Chef Instructor at a traditional culinary school, he realized there was a void in contemporary, fully immersive culinary education in the area that matched up with the modern-day food industry. From there, the inspiration and passion behind CulinaryLab was born.

A big factor that sets CulinaryLab apart from other culinary schools is its vibrant apprenticeship program. The school partners with top restaurants in the industry so students get the necessary real-world experience to be successful while they continue to learn advanced techniques and skills in the classroom kitchen. The paid apprenticeship program includes affiliate restaurants such as Studio at Montage Laguna Beach, The Ritz Carlton, Old Vine Cafe, Anepalco, and Haven Gastropub, to name a few.

For those who love to cook, but aren't quite ready to make it a career, there are a variety of foundational series classes to choose from. It's like culinary school for the home cook looking to gain tangible useful skills that can be implemented in their own kitchens immediately.

Whether you're looking to improve your cooking chops as a home cook, work in a hotel at a high-end restaurant, open a food truck, or become a private chef or food stylist, CulinaryLab is the spot where you can make your culinary dreams come true.

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sunday›
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fri/10/20

[DRAG]

Cheers, Witches!

Drop Dead GDREgeous

The only thing that can make drag even draggier is tossing in some haunting Halloween horrors—and Velvet Lounge has your front-row ticket to ghoulish girls and scream queens all slashed up and ready to deliver their demonic delights on a platter (beware of splatters!) Come see bewitching beauties strangle their stuff and execute their erotica as you chow down on a three-course dinner of meats or veggie options (severed head of broccoli anyone?) that'll leave you moaning straight into the midnight hours. Not a show to be missed!

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Drop Dead GOREgeous at Velvet Lounge, 416 W. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 664-0663, wwwvelvetoc.com. 6:30 & 8:30 p.m. Through Nov. 5. $44.99–$69.99
—SR DAVIES

[FESTIVALS]

Creeping It Real

Long Beach Zombie Fest

Not to be confused with the original LB Zombie Walk, which will occur at the same location on Oct. 28, Zombie Fest is another occasion to celebrate the grotesqueries of the undead. This gala zombie gathering will feature its own zombie walk, a haunted maze, a haunted scare zone, a scavenger hunt, an escape room, zombie make-up demonstrations (with free professional applications), dancing, live music (featuring Dead Man's Party) and more! There will likely be abundant gore effects, but the event is meant for the whole family. Besides, what better way is there to desensitize your young ones to a zombie apocalypse than by exposing them to the next best thing?

Long Beach Zombie Fest at Rainbow Lagoon, 400-403 Shoreline Village Dr., Long Beach, longbeachzombiefest.com. 5 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $5–$20.
—SCOTT FEINBLATT

sat/10/21

[FOOD & DRINK]

HAVE A DRINK

Monster Beer Fest

October is that magical month when adults can freely get drunk in public while wearing any number of assorted "costumes." Really, anything passes for a Halloween costume. Starbucks cup? Sure. Sexy Starbucks cup? If you must. Sexy border-patrol officer? Please don't. But for those who want to put the scare back into the drunk-and-in-costume game, this one is for you. Back for a second year, Rock & Brews in Buena Park hosts Monster Beer Fest, an unlimited beer-tasting event with pours from more than 75 breweries, which also includes a smattering of pumpkin-favored beers. There's also food, music, contests and prizes—and costumes are strongly encouraged. Make it a good one.

Monster Beer Fest at Rock & Brews, 7777 Beach Blvd., Buena Park, (714) 266-0314, www.rockandbrews.com/buenapark. Noon. $40. 21+. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Don't Stop the Party!

Enrique Iglesias & Pitbull

Two titans of mainstream Latin pop are finally performing together under one ticket as they embark on a co-headlining tour. Enrique Iglesias (son of Julio and onetime host of the largest mole in pop music) never stops evolving his sound, and while most artists who have been around this long cross over to other entrepreneurial interests, Iglesias is still at it, recently releasing the danceable single "Subeme La Radio." Armando Christian Pérez, a.k.a. Pitbull, is as relevant as ever, and while his signature catchphrase makes him the butt of imitation, never forget he has an honorary Ph.D. and is an inspiration to many young Cuban immigrants. These two are a Latin-music dream team who have endeared themselves to the hearts of many fans, both young and old. *Dale!* over to the Honda Center tonight!

Enrique Iglesias & Pitbull at the Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, www.hondacenter.com. 8 p.m. $39–$199.95
—AIMEE MURILLO

sun/10/22

[CONCERT]

You've Got Time

Regina Spektor

One can imagine a treasure trove of stories sitting around in Regina Spektor's brain from her unconventional life experiences: Born in Russia, the classically trained pianist left her native Moscow with her parents in 1989 because of antisemitism. She came of age in New York, and after learning how to write her own songs, she became a widely known fixture in the city's growing anti-folk music movement. But Spektor has long devoted her lyrics to exploring other characters' stories, singing them with such quirky vocal ticks as glottal stops, hiccups and beat boxing. If there's anything we can expect from Spektor's performance tonight, it's that she has many surprises in store—and it'll hopefully be a chance to get more personal.

Regina Spektor at the House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim. 7 p.m. $59.50 —AIMEE MURILLO

[FAMILY EVENTS]

Play All Day

Art & Culture Festival

The whole family is welcome to attend this all-day event, hosted by local community group Creative Dynamics. Beginning with a traditional Danza Azteca performance, attendees can check out the visually exciting Capoeira and Shaolin Kung Fu groups enact demonstrations of their crafts. Plus—as is the norm of any family-friendly jaunt—there's live music, face painting, art, watercolor-painting workshops and activities for the kiddos, poetry slams, ceramics, a harvest exchange, and displays of instruments from ancient Mexico. Consider this a welcome precursor to the late Hallow's Eve season, and join the merry festivities!

Art & Culture Festival at El Centro, 837 N. Ross St., Santa Ana, www.facebook.com/SantaAnaArtists. 1 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

mon/10/23

[ART]

Artist Abroad

'Oan McCleary: Prints From Oaxaca'

Lesser known than Dan McCleary's oil paintings of larger-than-life figures are his prints, made in Oaxaca under the tutelage of master printmaker and lithographer Fernando Sandoval. McCleary first started visiting Sandoval at his Taller de Grabado in 2000, and since then, he has been producing stunning etchings and drawings of familiar Oaxacan sights such as passersby, portraits and still-lifes, as well as sugar skulls and the head of Jesus Christ. These works (many for the first time) are on view at the Laguna Art Museum as part of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA.

"Dan McCleary: Prints From Oaxaca" at Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-8971, lagunaartmuseum.org. 11 a.m. Through Jan. 4. $5-$7. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/10/24

[FILM]

Worth the Buzz

The Fly

An unlikely box-office success when it was released, 1958's *The Fly* is a film that examines the unintended dystopian consequences of scientific advancements. Scientist Andre Delambre is living the quintessential American dream as he builds a transporter—think original *Star Trek*—that he calls a disintegrator-integrator. All is going well until the technology malfunctions, turning his life upside-down. One critic called it "the most ludicrous, and certainly one of the most revolting scientific-horror films ever perpetrated," and the chance to see this classic on the big screen is priceless.

The Fly at Directors Cut Cinema Laguna Niguel, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446, www.regencymovies.com. 7:30 p.m. $8. —HEATHER MCCOY

wed/10/25

ANNA WEBBER

[CONCERT]

BOTH SIDES NOW

Stephen Stills & Judy Collins

Ever since the late 1960s, Stephen Stills and Judy Collins have been inextricably linked. First as lovers, then as pals, Collins was the inspiration for the Stills-penned, Crosby, Stills and Nash-recorded "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes," which is debatably the trio's biggest song. Even though it's years after their respective primes, it makes sense they'd want to roll back the years. On their new covers album, the duo give a professional effort that's admirable at this advanced stage in their careers. A Stills/Collins album was long overdue, and it gives them a good excuse to hit the road collectively. If nothing else, this show will provide a dose of nostalgia, along with versions of familiar songs that have you longing for those formative days on the Sunset Strip.

Stephen Stills & Judy Collins with Bhi Bhiman at the Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930, thecoachhouse.com. 8 p.m. $100. —DANIEL KOHN

[FOOD & DRINK]

Sail Away

Brews & Brats Oktober Cocktail Cruise

While everyone else celebrates Oktoberfest on dry land, kick up your feet and enjoy a cool sea breeze, an ocean view and the Newport Beach sunset. Every week this month, Hornblower Cruises offers two-hour tours during which you'll be able to check out the *sea*-nery off the Newport coast and be treated to delectable bratwurst, fries, pretzel bites with dip, and German beer, cocktails and wine. Take in the outdoor spectacle of waves, paddle boarders, sailboats, yachts and other ocean rumblers basking in the final hours of daylight from either inside the ship's cabin (where relaxing music will be playing) or outside on the deck. Don't forget to wear your lederhosen. *Prost!*

Brews & Brats Oktober Cocktail Cruise at Hornblower Cruises, 2431 W. Pacific Coast Hwy., Newport Beach, (949) 631-2469, www.hornblower.com. 5:30 p.m. $37 (food and drinks not included). —AIMEE MURILLO

thu/10/26

[CONCERT]

Tigers Uncaged

Tiger Army

It's the weekend of Halloween, which means psychobilly icons Tiger Army are hitting the Observatory for Octoberflame IX. The annual tradition brings together costumes, punk rock and standup basses, and Nick 13 and crew promise to bring a slew of special guests with them to make each of the three nights an unforgettable experience. With the band releasing a new record next year, these shows will be fans' last chance to see Tiger Army for a while. Here's to at least another hundred years of the beloved concert series—and to hoping Tiger Army and Octoberflame never die.

Tiger Army presents Octoberflame IX with the Blasters and Hillbilly Casino at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m., also Oct. 27-28. $35. —JOSH CHESLER

[ART]

MENTAL MENUDO

'Aztlán to Magulandia'

If ASCO were the Beatles of the Chicano Arts movement, then Los Four were the Kinks—not as flashy or as well-known, but more of the streets and with an earthier populist style that's finally getting its proper due. And the Ray Davies of the quartet was Gilbert "Magu" Lujan, who's getting his first full survey six years after his death. UC Irvine's Contemporary Arts Center hosts a bit of everything: sketches, drawings, paintings and sculptures, all capturing *el maestro* (and Antaeter) in his seamless Magulandia of Aztec, barrio and Chicano themes. Let's also hope his legendary lowrider makes a cameo, a ranfla that makes Drag-u-la look like a *pinche* Yugo.

"Aztlán to Magulandia: The Journey of Chicano Artist Gilbert 'Magu' Lujan" at CAC Gallery, 712 Arts Plaza, Irvine, (949) 824-2787, uag.arts.uci.edu. Noon Through Dec. 16. Free. —GUSTAVO ARELLANO

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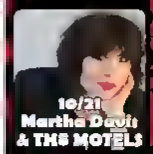

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10/25	STEPHEN STILLS & JUDY COLLINS
10/28	STEPHEN STILLS & JUDY COLLINS
10/27	AMERICA
10/28	AMERICA
10/29	DINGO BINGO HALLOWEEN DANCE PARTY
11/3	PETTY vs EAGLES
11/4	SINBAD
11/5	SECONDHAND SERENADE
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12/3	VONDA SHEPARD
12/7	ANUHEA
12/8	BERLIN
12/9	JONNY LANG
12/10	JONNY LANG
12/15	GARY HO HO HOEY
12/17	TOWER OF POWER
12/27	ANDREW MCMAHON IN THE WILDERNESS *Acoustic*
12/26	ANDREW MCMAHON IN THE WILDERNESS *Acoustic*
12/30	SUPER DIAMOND
12/31	DONAVON FRANKENREITER

1/12	TOMMY CASTRO
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1/26	JEFFERSON STARSHIP
2/10	THE MUSICAL BOX
2/14	OTTMAR LIEBERT & LUNA NEGRA
2/21	SHOVELS & ROPE
2/23	AMBROSIA
2/28	TINSLEY ELLIS
3/8	GARY PUCKETT & THE UNION GAP
3/10	WALTER TROUT
3/18	STEVE TYRELL
3/17	ST. PATRICK'S DAY WITH THE FENIANS
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BRIAN FEINZIMER

Cross the Road

Is the limited supply of the one dish at Yang's Braised Chicken Rice worth the long lines?

BY EDWIN GOEI

For a place that makes only one dish, the hype for Yang's Braised Chicken Rice was deafening. Word that the restaurant—the first U.S. outpost of a Chinese chain with 6,000 locations in Asia and Australia—was opening in Tustin spread like juicy gossip among OC's Chinese community and the food press.

And when it opened to the public, what ensued can either be called a marketing success or a logistical fustercluck. There were reports of two-hour wait times that may or may not have included how long it took for the meal to be delivered. And the restaurant was routinely running out of food. Yes, that's right. Although Yang's sells only one dish (clay-pot chicken), it was apparently limiting itself to making only a fixed number of bowls per day. If you came after that last bowl was sold, the staff wouldn't even let you in the building.

Was the limited supply a deliberate marketing ploy? Or was Yang's the kind of place that would rather risk a few angry customers than sacrifice quality over quantity? I was going to find out, even it took several attempts. Besides, it wasn't my first rodeo. I've seen it all before. In 2009, I chased the Kogi truck all over OC as the cops chased it out. Three years ago, I waited four hours for a seat at the new Din Tai Fung at South Coast Plaza. And two years ago, after hearing that the queue at the first Halal Guys in OC was 100 bodies deep, I arrived hours before the doors opened.

I applied the same strategy here. I got to the restaurant an hour before its 11 a.m. opening time expecting to see at least a handful of people. Instead I found no one—not one soul. A sheet of paper taped to the door said, "Sold Out." After I concluded that the sign was from the night before, and because I was starting to feel a bit silly standing out there by myself, I left.

When I came back at 11:05 a.m., a queue had finally formed outside, but it wasn't much longer than the line at In-N-Out. An employee was now handing out tickets to the new arrivals. One ticket, she said, entitles you to buy a bowl. And only one ticket is allowed per person. She meant that last part. When a woman in line asked for two additional tickets, the employee told her curtly, "Everyone in your party has to be here to get a ticket."

She also revealed that only 70 bowls would be served during this lunch period. Another 130 would be available later, when the restaurant opened again for dinner at 5 p.m.

Soon, I was inside. Except for a flat-screen TV that played the restaurant's origin story on a loop, the dining room was starkly furnished with cold metal chairs and bare wood tables. The sound on the TV was turned off, but I got the gist from the subtitles. A chef named Xian Lu Yang opened the first Yang's Braised Chicken Rice in 2011 in Shandong Province using his grandmother's secret recipe and sauce. And it's in this bottled sauce the company mass-produced that the chicken both marinates and braises. However, looking into the kitchen, I saw not one bottle of it. What I did see was a crew of three men cooking all the orders individually, each in its own thick iron pot and over its own burner.

When my order was called, my pot was carefully transferred from the stove to my tray with tongs and a dome of rice on top. And since I opted for the "authentic" version instead of the "original" or "spicy," there were sliced serrano peppers mixed into the gravy along with sliced mushrooms and the morsels of chicken.

I sent a picture of the dish to a friend who'd been to the original in China. Upon seeing my text, he told me it looked different than what he's had. It's usually served with the rice on the side, he wrote. And in the Chinese stores, the chicken is bone-in.

"I guess adjustments must be made for us McNuggets eaters!" I replied.

Still, this wasn't a Panda Express stir-fry. Soupy rather than greasy, monochromatic in looks but umami-packed in flavor, the smells enveloped my head with aromas of Chinese rice wine and ginger. I loved it. And as I dug in to my still-steaming bowl, I noticed the line had tapered off. I realized it was because the door had been shut. I saw a group of people outside who were scratching their heads at the same "Sold Out" sign I encountered earlier. As they checked their watches, so did I. It was only noon.

YANG'S BRAISED CHICKEN RICE
13824 Red Hill Ave., Tustin, (714) 731-7777, ymyusa.com. Open daily, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. & 5-8 p.m. Braised chicken rice, $9.99. No alcohol.

HOLE IN THE WALL
» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Heart of Bánh Mì

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Is the banh mi over? Lee's Sandwiches locations now sit smug next to the 5 freeway, and many office luncheons now feature the Vietnamese sandwich as a catering option. They're so ubiquitous now that hipster Asian chefs seem to prefer churros, cookies, fried chicken and other Americana staples for their "concepts" instead of trying to trick up the bánh mì, content to let the Che Calis and Top Baguettes of Little Saigon monopolize the market.

Perhaps the banh mi is a victim of its own success—it's even more mainstream-friendly than pho. Perhaps its seeming simplicity—baguette, an aioli, some veggies and meat—intimidates aspiring restaurateurs from tackling it. But the fact remains fewer banh mi shops are opening. And while the sandwich isn't at all endangered, its day in the foodie sun has gone the way of the Gypsy Den.

But, damn, a great bánh mì still has the capacity to wow. Consider those served at Au Coeur de Paris, which also happens to be the best French-style bakery in Little Saigon. Even in the world of austere Vietnamese strip-mall restaurants, Au Coeur is simple: some tables inside and out and pastry cases. The latter are filled with delicate macarons and perfect eclairs and long jesuites that are all about the almond paste and flaky crust. There's a separate case for the pâté chaud, the meatball-stuffed puff pastry that tastes like an especially buttery croissant sandwich. Order them all, order them to go, and then enjoy the bánh mì, which isn't even labeled as such ("sandwich on baguette").

There's only three versions regularly available: chicken, Vietnamienne (pâté, pork and meatloaf) and the Française, which is ham and cheese. Order a dozen if Au Coeur is offering the pâté chaud bánh mì, but all are spectacular thanks to the in-house baguette, a sturdy, chewy thing that absorbs all the juices of the ingredients. These bánh mìs are smaller and more expensive than the competition, but that's fine: outside of the lemongrass beef banh mi at Banh Mi Cho Cu, I can't think of any better. Banh mis are over? Just means more for me!

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EDWIN GOEI

A Bite of Portuguese Hawaii

Coconut malasada at Paderia Bakehouse

I mean no disrespect to the Loop and everyone willing to stand in line for its churros when I say I'd rather go to Paderia Bakehouse for its malasadas. Here's why: Churros are everywhere—Disneyland, the Del Taco drive-thru, friggin' Costco! But malasadas? Not so much.

Unlike poke, this Portuguese doughnut that's arguably more popular than the regular one in Hawaii can only be found in a handful of places here. But aside from a few brave doughnut vendors and Hawaiian barbecues who do it, businesses that devote their entire shops to making them well are few and far between. That's why I consider Paderia special. It displays its malasadas as though they were antiquity museum rarities. Most important, they taste just like the malasadas I've had from Leonard's on Oahu and Tex Drive In on the Big Island.

They're fluffy, rich in egg, dusted in granulated sugar and stuffed full of things I actually want injected into a doughnut. The ube is striking, and the Nutella cream is decadent. But the cooling and subtle coconut cream is by far the cheapest way I've found to bring me back to an island-vacation mood, short of booking a ticket.

EATTHISNOW

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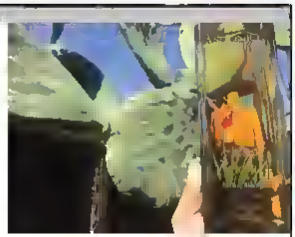
DRINKOFTHEWEEK

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Don Antonio Aguilar Mezcal Reposado

Three years ago when I got married, my good *profe* friend Adrian Felix gave me a bottle of Don Antonio Aguilar Mezcal Reposado not just because I'm a *borracho* but also because I'm a *zacatecano* and the legendary *ranchera* singer is a demigod to us. But I didn't touch the bottle until a couple of months ago because I was afraid. Aguilar is famous not just for great songs across all genres but also for being a superstar with humility and setting the example of how a true Mexican *macho* should act (something carried on by his son Pepe). The last thing I needed was for Aguilar's namesake mezcal to suck.

But then, this summer, another friend gave me a bottle, and I decided to crack open Adrian's gift. Forgive me, Don Antonio, for ever doubting your legacy—*su mezcal 'te nca*


GUSTAVO ARELLANO

THE DRINK

It's a Zacatecas style mezcal, which means it eschews the smokiness of Oaxaca for Zacatecas' rough-yet-beautiful terroir. There's a sweetness and lightness reminiscent of tequila, which makes sense since Zacatecas borders Jalisco. Better yet, the bottle's label is a photo illustration of Aguilar along with the line "*Pa' mi la vida es un sueño*" ("For me, life is a dream") from his torch song "*Un Puño de Tierra*" ("A Fistful of Dirt"). *Gracias*, Adrian, for the amazing gift, *¡y que me siga la banda!*

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SARAH BENNETT

Best Long Beach Lunch Spots!

Our far-flung correspondent weighs in with her favorites

BEST FALAFEL
The HipPea
Following the wisdom of places such as In-N-Out (do one thing and do it right), the HipPea stakes its reputation on its falafel—a crispy-crunchy gluten-free mass of chickpea fritter that, once bitten into, reveals a soft green, parsley-and-herb-mashed interior. For falafel fanatics, it's a hearty take on the Middle East snack that's Edenic, especially when served inside a deep pita pocket or in boxes of various sizes with a salad and a side of garlic-free hummus. The recipe, owner Christian Trochez will tell you as he hands you a sample (which he will inevitably do if you stare at the minimal menu with any confusion), is made the way his wife Vered Azari's grandmother used to cook it, based on an Egyptian flavor profile, but served Israeli-style. *2023 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 343-7722, www.thehippea.net*

BEST PLACE TO EAT RAW
Under the Sun
Without really knowing it, Long Beach's Under the Sun is the city's first purveyor of humanese, the term An Lac's chef once gave to his raw, animal-free food, all prepared at temperatures under 118 degrees in order to maintain key nutrients, enzymes and vitamins. The restaurant has no affiliation with An Lac nor its OC roots, yet it manages to present raw food in a similarly approachable way by crafting impressively seasoned dishes in a thoughtful space. The secret to Under the Sun's growing menu of activated-almond toasts, zucchini pastas, cold-brew-coffee elixirs and turmeric tonics is the power-couple ownership team of Chrissy Cox and Dawna Bass, who have been positive fixtures in the city's health-food scene since they launched Rainbow Juices in 2011. *244 E. Third St., Long Beach, (562) 912-7500, underthesunlb.com.*

LongBeachLunch

» SARAH BENNETT

BEST NEW BREWERY
Long Beach Beer Lab
Levi Fried grew up in Long Beach but left at 17; he learned to brew his own beer while doing a residency in the Middle East. His wife, Harmony Sage, worked in fine-dining kitchens around the world before they moved the family back to the U.S. a few years ago to build their own personal laboratories—a kitchen with a room-sized imported oven for her and a 10-barrel brewery filled with Kosher wine barrels for him. Sage cultivated wild yeast from local fruit for her sourdough starter, which is found in all breads and the pizza crust; Fried has a similar obsession with airborne bugs and uses them to make funky, tart beers that take months to mature. *518 W. Willow St., Long Beach, lbbeer.com.*

BEST MARISCOS
Cheko El Rey Del Sarandeado
For most of the modern era, LA's reigning king of Mexican mariscos has been Nayarit native Vicente "Chente" Cossio, whose family's small empire of seafood restaurants (and his legendary pescado zarandeado recipe, improved upon by his Sinaloan son-in-law Sergio Peñuelas) has its own cult following. Another wing of the Cossio family brought Peñuelas down to Long Beach, where he helped to open Cheko el Rey del Sarandeado on Market Street last year. Yes, it offers the famous pescado zarandeado, which takes more than 30 minutes to prepare. But there's more, including the Tostaditos Locas, a party-ready appetizer so impressively stacked with sea life that it's fated to end up bastardized in a *Bon Appetit* issue someday. *343 E. Market St., Long Beach, (562) 422-4885.*

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Frontera Farce

Three decades later, Cheech Marin's *Born in East L.A.* turns tragicomic in Trump times

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

GABRIEL SAN ROMAN

The summer of 1987 was a great time for Mexicans in Southern California. Dodgers pitcher Fernando Valenzuela delivered his last decent season before wearing out his arm. Three million *paisanos* enjoyed amnesty *gracias* to Ronald Reagan. *La Bamba* burned up the screen, and its soundtrack by East Los Angeles' Los Lobos offered multiple songs of *el verano*. And Cheech Marin put Latinos on the big screen with *Born in East L.A.*, a low-budget comedy about a Chicano who mistakenly gets deported to Tijuana that opened strong, grossing more than $17 million at the box office.

Nostalgia for those days helped *Born in East L.A.* become a cult classic in the years and decades that followed. Every Chicano in Southern California had a VHS copy to relive the laughs. Families switched between watching Vin Scully call Dodgers games on KTTV-TV Channel 11 and reruns of the movie on KTLA-TV Channel 5. And to this day, the faithful recite the film's iconic lines, from Marin's laidback "*Waas sappening?*" to Tony Plana's seething "Get behind me, Satan!"

Marin wrote, directed and starred in *Born in East L.A.*, his first solo foray away from the dopey Cheech & Chong movies. But the film came out of the legendary duo's antics; the script expanded on Marin's hilarious 1985 parody of Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." off their *Get Out of My Room* comedy album. The film still holds strong all these decades later, not only thanks to that timeworn adage of what's old is new again, but also because it stands as a time capsule of a different, seemingly kinder era of illegal immigration.

Marin played Rudolfo "Rudy" Robles, a third-generation Chicano who struggled with Spanish. His mom (played by the late, great Lupe Ontiveros, in one of her few non-maid roles) tells him to pick up his border-crossing *primo* (played by Paul Rodriguez) at a downtown toy factory while she's out of town in Fresno.

Back in those days, *la migra* went by the name Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The agency raided the factory, found Robles hidden in a giant teddy bear and gave him an on-the-spot citizenship test by asking who the president was. "The guy in the cowboy hat, he used to be on *Death Valley Days*," he stumbled, confusing Reagan for John Wayne (even though Reagan in fact hosted the Western serial). Having left his wallet at home, the INS dismissed Robles' "I was born in East L.A." pleas and hauled him off to Tijuana.

On the other side, an INS agent ran Robles' name through the system and found an older man by the same identity without papers, but with an extensive arrest record, including three arrests in Santa Ana. With Robles' fate sealed, he took odd jobs in Tijuana to scrounge up enough money to pay a *coyote* for a ride back over the border. He meets Jimmy, a sketchy *gabacho* hustler, who puts him to work as a doorman for the Dragon Rojo Bar, an orange seller and a teacher of East Los street culture for "OTM" (Other Than Mexican) immigrants hoping to cross.

Marin's *Born in East L.A.* served as the comedic counterpoint to the Gregory Nava-directed 1984 drama *El Norte*, about Guatemalan immigrant refugees (who can ever forget the line "I *really* like your pants"?). Even though he's on hard times, Robles gives an orange to a poor, hungry boy, eventually giving his entire cart to the boy's family and underscoring the poverty that moves people to migrate (they return the favor by using the fruit as weapons when he gets assaulted). When Robles finally earns enough cash to head back, he selflessly gives up his spot in the back of a truck to an older woman who would be separated from her husband. Rather than work more odd jobs, he rounds up an army of immigrants, including Dolores, his new Salvadoran girlfriend, to storm the border by foot to Neil Diamond's "Coming to America"—a funny, Americana moment of triumph.

This mix of pathos and *pendejadas* confounded *gabacho* film critics when the movie debuted. "Rudy's route home is ludicrous, but then so is much in a film so ambiguous about ethnic stereotypes it might just as well have been made by insensitive Anglos," wrote Richard Harrington in the *Washington Post*. Those reviewers missed the burrito for the beans. Alongside Marin's funny yet heartwarming immigration tale is one that weaves through the assimilation experience. In TJ, Robles can't find the Spanish word for "napkin," but he jams "Twist and Shout" with street musicians who hear the chord progression of "La Bamba." (He then turned them into the hair-metal Rudy and the Nuevo Huevos Rancheros and did a sick cover of "Purple Haze," but that's another story.)

Sadly, the film's big anniversary comes at a time few Latinos will recall with nostalgia. Thirty years later, the real ludicrousness lies in anti-immigrant hysteria run amok, not *Born in East L.A.*'s script. A scene of a mad dash at daylight along the California border is an unthinkable punchline after years of fencing and ramped-up border security thanks to President Bill Clinton's Operation Gatekeeper in 1994. Even the film's own Paul Rodriguez turned *vendido*, voting for Mitt Romney, whose immigration plan asked immigrants to "self-deport."

Four years later, Donald Trump rode his "Mexican immigrants are rapists" trope all the way to the White House and ended the deportation deferments for many youth who crossed after *Born in East L.A.* debuted. It doesn't take more than one peek at pro-Trump "Build the Wall" memes to know they share *nada* with the subtly subversive humor in Marin's film.

It's enough to make anyone stop and ask, *Waas sappening?*

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

Baby-Proofing a Guillotine?

BY MATT COKER

Columbia Pictures

Halloween III: Season of the Witch. Tommy Lee Wallace's 1982 horror flick is the only one from the franchise missing Michael Myers. *The Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

Hausu (House). Nobuhiko Ôbayashi's 1977 deranged horror oddity about a schoolgirl who brings six classmates to her aunt's creaky country home where unexpected evil awaits. The film is presented in Japanese with English subtitles. *The Frida Cinema thefridacinema.org. Fri., 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

Camp Frida. Twelve straight hours of camp games, merit badges and what are billed as "some of the creepiest, woodsiest, goriest films to ever make you think twice about going back to camp!" *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri.-Sat., 9 p.m.-9 a.m. $20 (no passes or member discounts).*

The Nightmare Before Christmas. Tim Burton's animated classic about Halloweentown's beloved pumpkin king Jack Skellington, who becomes bored with frightening people before accidentally stumbling upon Christmastown, whose bright colors and warm spirits give him a new lease on life. *Beachfront Cinema at Huntington State Beach, Beach Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach; beachfrontcinema.com. Sat., 5 p.m. $10-$45.*

Hotel Transylvania 2. Dracula invites his monster pals to his daughter Mavis' 118th birthday, and all goes well until a normal guy stumbles into the party and falls hard for Mavis. *City Gym and Pool 1600 Palm Ave., Huntington Beach, (714) 960-3884. Sat., 6:15 p.m. Free.*

Lace Monster. Adam Fiske's short horror film premieres. *Art Theatre 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435. Sat., 9 p.m. $11.50.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. The car of sweethearts Brad and Janet breaks down near the eerie mansion of Dr. Frank N-Furter. Watch what's on and in front of the screen thanks to shadow cast Midnight Insanity. *Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sat., 11:55 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

Le Corsaire. The Bolshoi Ballet production beamed from Moscow into theaters across the U.S. was inspired by Lord Byron's epic poem. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Sun. 12:55 p.m. $15; also at Regency South Coast Village, 1561 Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701. Sun., 12:55 p.m., Tues., 7 p.m. $14-$17.*

South. The 1919 silent film features real footage Robert Hurley shot of Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition to Antarctica aboard the ship *Endurance*. This presentation features live narration and piano accompaniment by Robert York. *Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Norma Kershaw Auditorium, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600. Sun., 1:30 p.m. $9-$12.*

The Lair of the White Worm. This gonzo adaptation of a Bram Stoker novella has sisters Eve and Mary mourning the disappearance of their parents. A young archaeologist who is their lodger unearths a skull on their property he believes comes from a mythical beast slain generations ago by ancestors of the current lord. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Mon.-Tues., 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

Reel Rock 11. Climbers of all stripes scalesheer cliffs as they narrate what is going on inside their heads, with elte rnative music serving as the movie soundtrack. *Chapman University, Hashinger Science Center 150, Irvine Lecture Hall, 1 University Dr., Orange, chapman.edu. Tues., 7 p.m. Free.*

The Fly. It's the Kurt Neumann-directed, Vincent Price-starring original from 1958. *Regency Directors Cut Cinema at Rancho Niguel, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

The Shining. Stanley Kubrick's modern horror masterpiece of 1980. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Wed. Thurs., Oct. 25-26, 7:30 p.m. (also Oct. 28, 5 p.m.) $7-$10; also at Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed. Call for showtime. $8.*

Best of RiffTrax Live: Night of the Living Dead. The Mystery Science Theater 3000 alums' 2013 riff session on the late George Romero's *über*-influential zombie flick. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Wed. 7:30 p.m. $13-$15.*

War Horse. When World War I breaks out, Albert's father sells his beloved horse Joey to the British cavalry. *Fullerton Main Library, Osborne Auditorium, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., Oct. 26, 1 p.m. Free.*

Being Mortal. PBS *Frontline* documentary on writer and surgeon Dr. Atul Gawande's exploration of the relationship between doctors and patients near death. *Christ Cathedral Academy, Freed Theater, 13280 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove, www.rcbo.org. Thurs., Oct. 26, 6:30 p.m. $5.*

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Best In Show

Ten works worth seeing at Irvine Fine Arts Center's All Media exhibition

BY DAVE BARTON

There's always been something worth noting in previous All Media exhibitions at the Irvine Fine Arts Center, but the open group show, limited to Southern California artists vying for $1,300 in prizes, was often cluttered, any diamonds buried among a whole lotta coal. With a $20 entry fee coloring the proceedings, a cramped space filled with as many pieces as possible makes a certain fiscal sense, but the result often felt like overkill.

LA-based artist and curator Kim Abeles' finely tuned choices this year are a step in the right direction toward correcting that issue. This exhibition is pointedly less crowded, full of women artists pushing boundaries and of a higher quality, while still offering something for anyone interested. Of the more than 60 pieces on display, these 10 weird and wonderful works (listed in no particular order) made me look twice, moved me and, most important, danced at the darker aesthetic edge.

SO VERY TIRED

MONICA SANDOVAL, *TOGETHER AGAIN*

10. My mind went immediately to John Waters territory upon seeing Monica Sandoval's solvent inkprint on vinyl *Together Again*. In the forefront, a Dawn Davenport-sized model in a black bodysuit lies face-down on a bed of colorful flowers, catty-corner to a vine-encrusted brick wall. There's no pretense to real life here; it has the artificiality of a low-rent David LaChapelle image, the trashy cool of its composited image startling and memorable.

9. Andrea Bersaglieri's oil-on-canvas *Creep* is two sides of an otherwise-white canvas alive with the fatty green and sun-bleached brown of long weed tendrils, all beginning to spread slowly into the negative space between.

8. The snarling mouths of a pair of sculpted canines from Hell are bared as they eye you for their midnight snack in Samuelle Richardson's *Ghost Dogs*. Their stumpy, wooden poles for legs, carved teeth and two-tone patches of flesh stitched together with red thread remind us of *Frankenstein*, *Pet Sematary* and that next-door neighbor's violent, untrained mutt all at the same time. The palpable menace is a thing of testicle-tightening beauty, with one of the hounds noticeably at crotch height.

7. Marina Joyce's mixed-media collage *Vortex* gives us an existential vision of beauty transformed into L'Oréal-style emptiness: waves, braids, cascades and hair extensions, swirling and whirling into a bottomless hairy whirlpool.

6. With so much Trump-era political art seeming obvious and without imagination, Kerri Sabine-Wolf's distressing, surreal *Fly By* feels just right. A quintet of butterflies oil-painted onto a paper shooting-range target provide a wicked pun on "drive by," with any potential laughs elicited choked off by the real bullet holes in several of the butterflies' wings.

5. *Flesh Studies*' grid of nine oil paintings by Irin Mahaparn is a baroque butcher's dream. While likely closeups of uncooked meats, the brain creates associations with sex organs, figures folded in on themselves, and fetuses clothed in the browns, pinks, translucent grays, white fat and slick, wet gristle, nestled in smears of blood-red pigment. The small paintings on Mylar are intense and fascinating, an unusual subject matter and especially tender when compared to Francis Bacon's gruesome horror-show precedent.

4. The crumpled horse in several fragmented pieces holds a sweet sorrow that made me instantly fall in love. Peggy Sivert Zask's *Broken* feels frail and vulnerable, the cobbled-together wooden supports lending it a Humpty Dumpty dignity, standing strong until the impending shot comes barreling through its skull.

3. Carlos Grasso's engrossing mixed-media grid *9 Red States of Mind* feels as if nine concurrent thoughts had exploded onto nine canvases, each an elegantly visual gut punch. In the center is a face bound in a thick spiderweb of red yarn. Other images include a broken paint tube of dried red paint like a clogged artery, flayed open, a smiling woman in a bathing cap, surrounded by mushroom clouds, a heart resting on damask wallpaper; fleshy plastic strips underlined by a brass bolt, red goo under red burlap netting; a leaking, bandaged wound; the visual symmetry of a brick, some cloth and a colorfully painted ball, to name a few.

2. There are patterns to be seen in Karen Feuer-Schwager's *Fragile*. The small square tags, loops of string and greasy, stained teabag paper laid out on plexiglass have the thick, yellow density of a smoker's ceiling.

1. Kira Vollman's stylish and innovative installation, *Deception*, is the lightest and most hopeful of the pieces on my list. The stile of a wooden chair sprouts a tree limb, branches spidering out to embrace the viewer, as gnarled roots encircle the metal leg supports lifting it into the air. Beneath is a layer of brown soil, topped by dozens of dark walnuts. The chair isn't being reclaimed by nature so much as it seems to be finding its way back to its original form.

ALL MEDIA 2017

at Irvine Fine Arts Center, 14321 Yale Ave., Irvine, (949) 724-6880; www.cityofirvine.org/irvine-fine-arts-center/current-exhibitions. Open Mon.-Thurs., 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Oct. 28. Free.

TrendZilla

» AIMEE MURILLO

Halloween Fashion Guide

There's no wrong way to dress up for October, but if you want some cool designer clothing that lets you express your whimsical, ghoulish side, then trick or treat yourself to some stunning, fun and bewitching threads to wear this Halloween (and beyond!).

PINUP GIRL CLOTHING

Pinup Girl Clothing: Bringing in perhaps the best collaborators for some of its print dresses, Pinup Girl Clothing outdid itself this time by bringing in Cassandra Peterson, a.k.a. Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. You'll also find *Beetlejuice*, harlequin and jack-o'-lantern inspired prints. *www.pinupgirlclothing.com*.

Unique Vintage: This retro retailer pulls inspiration from multiple scream queens, including Lily Munster, Morticia Addams, Elvira and the Bride of Frankenstein, for some spellbinding looks. My faves are the white cape waggle dresses, the black fishtail waggle gown and the black vegan-leather lace-up boots. Cool bat accessories, too! *www.unique-vintage.com*.

Dolls Kill: We all have that friend who likes to dress up in skimpy costumes, and Dolls Kill's club-kid clothing will call to them: sheer bodysuits, crop tops and BDSM-inspired bustiers. Points for originality go to Lil' Kim at the VMAs, sexy fidget spinner (*nooooooh*), *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*, "Dirrty"-era Christina Aguilera and Cyber Cowboy. *www.dollskill.com*.

Modcloth: Modcloth's cutesy witch-inspired frocks include excellent print dresses and full skirts, but I love its assortment of accessories such as themed socks, tights, jewelry, string lights and toothpick holders in the shape of voodoo dolls. *www.modcloth.com*.

Harvey's: The classic seatbelt-bag company's latest purse collection is Disney Villainess-themed. While it doesn't exactly read as *Halloween*, the color schemes and designs of Maleficent, Cruella DeVille, Ursula and the evil queen from *Snow White* still have me saying, "Witch, please!" *shopharveys.com*.

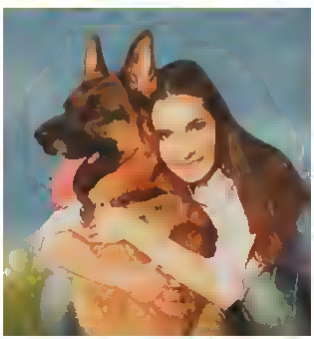
AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

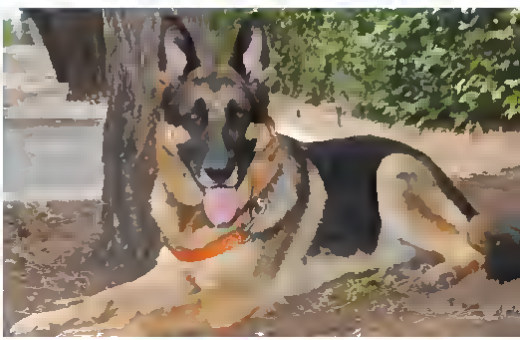
MORE ONLINE » OCWEEKLY.COM

GERMAN SHEPHERD RESCUE OF OC
Wish List

With so many shepherds depending on us, we are constantly in need of supplies. Can you help us with a donation of any of these items?

- Grain Free Dog Treats
- Fish Oil Capsules for large dogs
- Advantix or Frontline Plus Flea Control
- Puppy Potty-Training Pads
- Durable Puppy Toys
- Dasequan Joint Supplement
- Postage Stamps, Gasoline Gift Cards, Office Supplies
- Canned Pumpkin
- Oatmeal Shampoo, Oatmeal Conditioner
- Petco or PetSmart Gift Cards
- Raffle or Silent Auction Items for fundraising
- Bleach, Rubber Gloves, Deck Brushes





GERMAN SHEPHERD RESCUE OF ORANGE COUNTY

A Fresh Start for Deserving Dogs

BRAND STORY

German Shepherd Rescue of Orange County has been rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming German Shepherd dogs that have nowhere else to turn since 1998. As a grassroots non-profit organization, GSROC assists dogs that have suffered abandonment, abuse, neglect and injury. Approximately 50% of the dogs that enter the rescue are surrendered directly from families who no longer want their animals due to personal crisis, moving, or financial hardship, while the other 50% of dogs come from local animal shelters. On average, GSROC has more than 80 dogs in its care, with a placement rate of 300+ dogs every year. The volunteer-driven organization survives entirely on donations, receiving no government funding or municipal support.

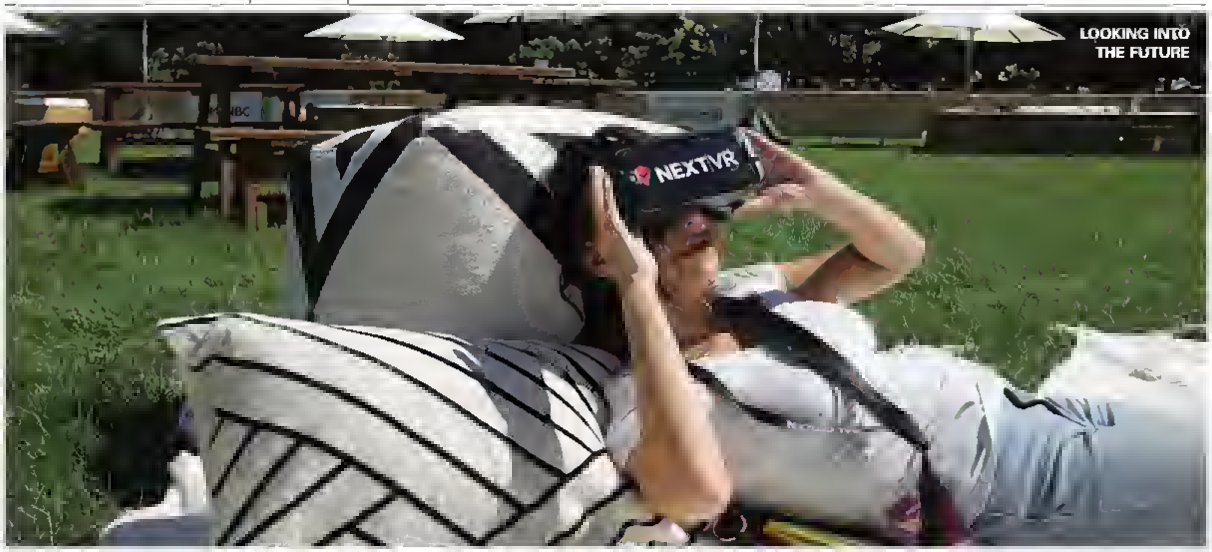
Contrary to popular belief, the dogs that enter the rescue are not necessarily 'damaged' or of poor quality. Typically, the dogs are discarded by no fault of their own, with "moving" being the most common reason for abandoning a dog, "no time for" being the second most common reason, and caretaker injury or illness being the third. GSROC prides itself on matching dogs to families based on each dog's personality and each family's experience level and lifestyle.

"We are not a volume-driven business," explains GSROC Director Maria Dales. "We take care and time to place dogs in homes where we believe they will thrive and be happy. Think of us as a 'match-making' service for German Shepherds. We are their ambassadors. Our job is not to send every applicant home with a dog—our job is to ensure that each dog in our care finds a permanent, loving home."

Recognizing that there are many animal lovers who would like to help but may not be in a position to adopt a German Shepherd dog, GSROC offers these suggestions for how you can make a difference for needy dogs in the local community:

- Foster a homeless dog – German Shepherd Rescue of OC provides food, medical support and marketing while a dog awaits adoption in your home.
- Sponsor vet care—Dogs that arrive with injuries or illness receive quality care at local veterinary hospitals. Tax-deductible donations to the rescue ensure that critical treatment can be provided.
- Volunteer—The rescue welcomes reliable volunteers for walking, bathing and transporting dogs.
- Donate unwanted vehicles– Cars, trucks, boats and RVs accepted.
- Host a fundraiser, garage sale, bake sale or other activity to raise funds.
- Spread the word about GSROC dogs for adoption.
- Promote Spay and Neuter to prevent pet overpopulation.

German Shepherd Rescue of OC is a 501c3 non-profit organization (EIN-20-3455479). For more information, to volunteer and to view available dogs, please visit **GSROC.ORG**



LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

COURTESY NEXTVR

Rockin' In the V World

Local tech firm turns virtual reality into a real concert experience

BY MICHAEL SILVER

Though it's probably never occurred to most nerds outside the tech industry, OC is home to one of the largest hubs for innovation in the country. And that distinction recently branched into the music world and the way we watch concerts. One company is particular, NextVR, took the possibilities to a whole new level.

As the digital landscape of millennials continues to morph and expand, 2017 has shown great progress in the world of virtual and augmented reality. Going to an IMAX film for a 3D screening is already becoming a thing of the past, as wearable technology shoots to the forefront. NextVR, which launched in 2009 as Next 3D for live television, primarily in live sports, but rebranded in 2013, has become the industry leader in virtual reality. "[It was] a fairly dramatic shift," David Cole, the CEO and co-founder of NextVR, says. The mission statement was "to capture and transmit reality in perfect fidelity."

But wait, why is a start-up company like this in OC? Isn't Silicon Valley the ideal location? "Proximity to Hollywood, for the entertainment component of the business, has been very critical," Cole explains. "We're in the mobile business, roughly 85 percent to 90 percent of the market in VR right now is consuming the content on their phones, and truly the epicenter of mobile-technology business is between here and San Diego with Qualcomm."

And now, NextVR offers a one-of-a-kind experience through a partnership with Live Nation, allowing fans to watch performances in VR from the comfort of their homes.

I spent a recent Saturday afternoon at NextVR's headquarters next to Fashion Island, getting a hands-on demonstration of the tech. To start, three things were needed: a Samsung smartphone, the Oculus app and, of course, a GearVR headset. (For those who are iPhone hfers, Cole does not dismiss the possibilities. "We've really only seen the tip of the iceberg from Apple," he says. "From their hiring, acquisitions and filing patents and what [Apple CEO] Tim Cook has said personally, there's lots to come from them. It's mostly been targeted at developers to get them interested in tOS as a platform for immersive media.")

Once these essentials were in play, I could sit back, relax and enjoy the show. The Global Citizen Festival, set on the Great Lawn of Central Park in New York City, featured A-list talent including Stevie Wonder, Green Day, the Killers, the Lumineers, the Chainsmokers, and Big Sean and Alessia Cara. My VR excursion effortlessly took me 3,000 miles across the country and provided a front-row seat to an amazing show. There were multiple cameras onstage, and I could choose to view the concert through any one or the director's view, for which the camera cuts to different angles based on the live broadcast.

Of course there are tangible differences we can't ignore between a virtual concert and one in real life. Lying down on the grass of Central Park or the polo fields at Coachella and smelling the aromas of weed, whiskey and pizza simply can't be replicated through a headset.

Pros include the adjustable headset, which gives a snug fit; the ability to stand or sit freely where desired; the lack of annoying hippies or ravers in your peripheral vision, and being able to get lost in the moment as you enjoy the concert. Also, with VR, you won't be that guy without a ticket trying to get into a sold-out show. If you were unable to secure seats and still wanted to attend, this platform is a solid backup solution. It beats being packed in like sardines with people farting, blowing smoke in your face and blocking your view.

Among the cons: Eating and drinking, as well as bathroom breaks, mostly require unplugging yourself from the device; wearing headphones can feel cumbersome; interacting with friends is not an option; and feeling the pulse of the crowd is hard to gauge.

Knowing Live Nation's strong musical roots, I wanted to hear more about its partnership with OC's tech leader. "Live music was absolutely a No. 1 priority to the [VR] platform," Cole says. "The two earliest pieces of content that we produced internally were a Coldplay concert and a [Golden State] Warriors basketball game.

"Live Nation actually came to us with the concept of building a relationship. Live Nation does upward of 28,000 live shows per year," Cole continues. "They are without a doubt the largest cornucopia of riches when it comes to live music on the planet."

Ever wondered what your favorite band or DJ does to pregame? Live Nation has you covered. "Extending the fan experience like going backstage and private moments with the artists, sharing these elements, even if you attend, [you] would not be able to see," Cole explains.

While music is a big component to NextVR, the company also has sports contracts with the NBA and boxing, tennis and soccer leagues worldwide. "Our cameras are always close to the action, which means that you feel the intensity more," Cole says. "The thrill of victory and agony of defeat, as they say."

After a full day of conversations and concert viewing, I felt as if there's no limit to the level of reality we'll be able to simulate in our entertainment viewing, right down to the mundane details. "6DoF, or six degrees of freedom, is coming to platform," Cole says. "Imagine a referee was standing in front, blocking your view. Now you can scoot two feet to the left and look around him, that increases viewer realism dramatically."

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

JOHN GILHOOLEY

Rad-incarnated

Ex-members of the Adolescents return to the punk scene as the Radolescents

BY BRITTANY WOOLSEY

The McCartney and Lennon of OC punk are back together. Rikk Agnew and Casey Royer, who performed in the Adolescents together in the 1980s, have joined forces as the Radolescents.

Alongside other Adolescents alumni, the duo performed the band's classic 1981 self-titled release, better known as *The Blue Album*, and the *Welcome to Reality* EP last month at the Doll Hut. If you weren't able to cram into the tiny punk-rock roadhouse for that show, you'll get another chance to see them Oct. 27 at the Karman Bar.

Few things can inspire us to drive to the bowels of Laguna Niguel like the prospect of hearing the searing melodies and snarling attitude of such punk classics as "Kids of the Black Hole," "Creatures" and "Amoeba," all of which have become staples for any local punk band worth their salt to cover. But this time, they'll be churned out by the guys who actually created the songs. "I saw a picture of the Adolescents now, and it didn't even look like them," says Royer, a former Adolescents drummer who now fronts punk band D.I. "I thought it was so sad because Rikk and I were such a big part of the original Adolescents."

When they first started in the Fullerton-based punk band, Royer and Agnew—who also performed in Social Distortion and the Detours together—were older than the rest of the members. They were responsible for a lot of the songwriting, Royer says, and helped to create an infectious sound. "Rikk's guitar work and my drumming are a classic combination," he says. "We wrote stuff the kids can't emulate because it's almost like jazz."

Agnew and Royer each pursued other interests after the Adolescents called it quits temporarily after *The Blue Album* was released. Royer went on to form D.I., for which he continues to serve as vocalist. Agnew was part of D.I. from 1983 to 1987, and he re-joined the Adolescents from 1986 to 1989; he also began a solo career. But about three years ago, Royer and Agnew began reminiscing about the old days with the Adolescents and how much they missed playing that music.

Thus, Radolescents were born. Joining Agnew and Royer are former Adolescents John O'Donovan (guitar), Frank Agnew Jr. (vocals and Rikk's nephew) and Dan Colburn (bass).

Fan support of the new group has been strong, Agnew says. "The buzz was really surprising," he says. "Mine and Casey's sounds mesh together really well. We don't even have to look at each other or talk."

Using members of the original Adolescents lineup was a natural choice, Agnew explains, since the Adolescents today don't play much of *The Blue Album* or *Welcome to Reality* live, and fans want to hear those songs. "In my solo band, I do the five songs I co-wrote, and people go nuts over them," he notes.

Royer says the show will be a treat not only for the older generation of fans, but also for younger kids in today's punk scene. "The people who are in the 50s club, like we are, are all still going to the gigs," he says. "Their kids are also there, and it's just like this amazing musical adventure. Rock & roll has pretty much taken its toll. Punk rock is really its last wave."

THE RADOLESCENTS
perform at Karman Bar, 26022 Cape Dr., Laguna Niguel, [949] 582-5909, www.thekarmanbar.com. Oct. 27, 8 p.m. Call for cover. 21+

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DEZZY HOLLOW — CONSTELLATION ROOM SAT, OCT 21
SWMRS — SUN, OCT 22
CONSTELLATION ROOM SUN, OCT 22
FRENSHIP — CONSTELLATION ROOM TUE, OCT 24
CRYSTAL CASTLES — TUE, OCT 24
PAUL CAUTHEN — CONSTELLATION ROOM WED, OCT 25
6LACK — WED, OCT 25
TIGER ARMY — OCT 26–OCT 28
SANTOROS — CONSTELLATION ROOM THU, OCT 26
JUICY J WITH XAVIER WULF — SUN, OCT 29
BLACK STAR — SUN, OCT 29
EARTHLESS — CONSTELLATION ROOM SUN, OCT 29
MAKE IN TYO — MON, OCT 30
CONSTELLATION ROOM MON, OCT 30
THE OFFSPRING — IXNAY ON THE HOMBRE — OCT 30–OCT 31
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COURTESY DIAL-7

Death Ain't Got His Number

DIAL-7
perfnrm at the Garden Amphitheatre, 12762 Main St., Garden Grove, (714) 590-1579. Sun., 8 p.m. $15. All ages.

For the first time since the middle of the Bush presidency, Laguna Beach-based rap rockers Dial-7 are hitting the stage—albeit with a slightly changed lineup and a very different outlook on life. "This show is a big deal in a lot of different ways," says vocalist Mike Lord. "First and foremost, we haven't played in at least 12 years, so that's important. Two years ago, I almost died. I lost blood pressure three times in the hospital, and it turns out I had kidney failure, so I'm currently a living, working person on dialysis. The show is a celebration of life, love and loss that we've all had. It's a celebration of the fact that I'm still here."

With Lord's dialysis schedule taking up his Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights, it's tough for the group to get together to practice, let alone plan a new show. But on Sunday, Lord hits the Garden Amphitheatre stage alongside fellow vocalist Shauny B, bassist Barrett, drummer Michael "Clams" Hernandez, guitarist Dan Palmer (Zebrahead, Death By Stereo) and DJ Daniel Park.

Lord's secret to maintaining a positive attitude stems from the very music that inspired him as a child. "I was raised on all music—most important, probably Stevie Wonder, the Beatles, Chicago, and then straight '80s music," Lord says. "Being raised on all of that positive stuff, I always knew that I really loved music, and that's not something you can take away from me, but I'm not some cloud-over-my-head kind of guy. Probably the only time I've ever had a dark cloud over my head was when I lost my brother—who was also in the band—to a drunk driver 20 years ago this year."

Compared to that tragedy, Lord's medical battle has been a piece of cake—particularly considering the singer/songwriter is no longer afraid of death. His new lease on life has spurred him to get the band back together and keep any regrets in check. "I'm truly happy to be able to do the one thing that I love to do in life, and the one thing that I might really regret is not making enough music," Lord says. "For all the guys to get together and give me the opportunity to do what I love the most, it means the world to me. The Dial-7 fans are a real close-knit community, and they've been asking us to do this for a while. I know that I'll have a moment onstage when I'm actually able to reflect right there, take it all in, and do what I love to do—which is singing the music that we wrote."

While Dial-7 aren't making new music just yet, their 1998 debut, *Never Enough Time*, recently showed up on Spotify, much to the band's surprise. In many ways, the album remains relevant, with the songs maybe more appropriate now than two decades ago.

"We wrote this album a very long time ago, but it's amazing how much the music actually holds up today," Lord says. "It was prolific back then, but with the political climate that we're in today and with the loss of so many great artists, from Tom Petty to Prince to Chester Bennington, our world continues to change—not for the better. I'm all about the passion in music, and I just feel blessed and grateful just to have people remember our music."

LocalsOnly
» JOSH CHESLER

Hey, Orange County/Long Beach musicians and bands! Mail your music, contact info, high-res photos and impending show dates for possible review to Locals Only, *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708. Or email your link to localsonly@ocweekly.com.

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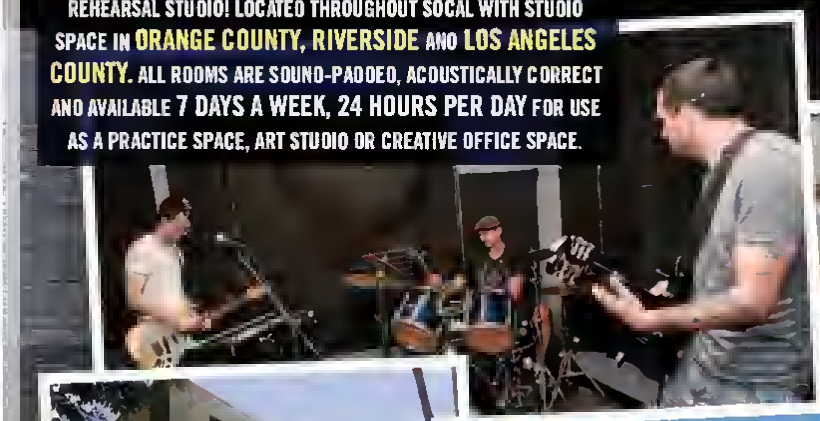

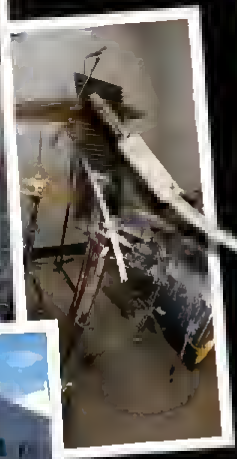

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THIS WEEK

FRIDAY

FREQUENCY FRIDAYS 10:30 p.m., free. Brussels Bistro, 222 Forrest Ave., Laguna Beach, (949) 376-7955, brusselsbistro.com.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE MUSIC AT THE DEN. 9 p.m., free. The Gypsy Den, 125 N. Broadway Ave., Santa Ana. (714) 835-8840; gypsydnn.com

KEVIN WOOD 8 p.m., free. The Library, 3418 E. Broadway, Long Beach. (562) 433-2383; thelibrarycoffeehouse.com.

LIVE JAZZ AND R&B. 7 p.m., free. The Durban Room at Mozambique, 1740 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-7777, mozambiquenc.com.

PRETZEL LOGIC 7:30 p.m., $15-$30. Spaghettini Rotisserie & Grill, 3005 Old Ranch Pkwy., Seal Beach, (562) 596-2199; spaghettini.com

PROOF BAR RESIDENT DJS 9 p.m., Iran. Proof Bar, 215 N. Broadway, Santa Ana. (714) 953-2660; proofbar.com

RITUAL: EDM DJs 9 p.m., free. Kitsch Bar, 891 Baker St. Ste. A10, Costa Mesa. (714) 546-8580; kitschbar.com.

RON KORAYASHI 10 p.m., free. Bayside Restaurant, 900 Bayside Dr., Newport Beach. (949) 721-1222, baysiderestaurant.com

SEGA GENECIDE 10 p.m., free. La Cave, 1695 Irvine Ave., Costa Mesa. (949) 646-7944, lacavenrestaurant.com.

SMASH FRIDAYS 9 p.m., free. The Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe Ave., Fullerton. (714) 449-1879; facebook.com/ContinentalRoom.

SATURDAY

RUMP 'N GRIND 9 p.m., $5. Que Sera, 1923 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 599-6170; queseralb.wix.com

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS & PITBULL 8 p.m., $39.95-$229.95. Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim. (714) 704-2400; hondacenter.com.

EPIC SATURDAYS 9:30 p.m., free. The Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe Ave., Fullerton. (714) 449-1879; facebook.com/ContinentalRoom

HANSON 6:45 p.m., $40. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; houseofblues.com/anaheim.

HIP-HOP HOORAY 9 p.m., free. Kitsch Bar, 891 Baker St. Ste. A10, Costa Mesa. (714) 546-8580; kitschbar.com.

LIVE JAZZ AND R&B. 7 p.m., free. The Durban Room at Mozambique, 1740 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-7777, mozambiquenc.com.

ORANGE COUNTY GUITAR CIRCLE FEATURED ARTIST RECITAL 8 p.m., $15. Bertea Hall, Chapman University, 1 University Dr., Orange.

PROOF BAR RESIDENT DJS. 9 p.m., free. Proof Bar, 215 N. Broadway, Santa Ana. (714) 953-2660; proofbar.com

STEREO SATURDAYS 10:30 p.m., free. Brussels Bistro, 222 Forrest Ave., Laguna Beach, (949) 376-7955, brusselsbistro.com.

SUNDAY

APOLLO BEROP BOTTOMLESS BRUNCH 8 a.m., free. The Gypsy Den, 125 N. Broadway Ave., Santa Ana. (714) 835-8840; gypsydnn.com

EXPANDING OC HIP-HOP 8 p.m., free. Doll Hut, 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim. (714) 533-1286.

FULLY FULLWOOD REGGAE SUNDAYS. 3 p.m., $5. Don the Beachcomber, 16278 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (562) 592-1321, donthebeachcomber.com

94.7 THE WAVE BRUNCH 11 a.m., $25. Spaghettini Rotisserie & Grill, 3005 Old Ranch Pkwy., Seal Beach, (562) 596-2199; spaghettini.com.

SUNDAY BLUES 4 p.m., free. Malarkey's Grill & Irish Pub, 196 N. Marina Dr., Long Beach. (562) 598-9431.

MONDAY

COUNTRY DANCIN' WITH DJ PATRICK 8:30 p.m., free. The Swallows Inn, 31781 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano. (949) 493-3188, swallowsinn.com.

DJ TOROSRROS 10 p.m., free. Kitsch Bar, 891 Baker St. Ste. A10, Costa Mesa, (714) 546-8580; kitschbar.com.

DOUG LACY ON THE PIANO 6 p.m., free. Ralph Brennan's Jazz Kitchen, 1590 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim. (714) 776-5200; rhjazzkitchen.com

KAROOM ORAG SHOW 9 p.m., free. Que Sera, 1923 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 599-6170; queseralb.wix.com

REAL ESTATE 8 p.m., $25. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com.

TUESDAY

CRYSTAL CASTLES 8 p.m., $25. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com.

PAUL WELLER 7 p.m., $35. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; houseofblues.com/anaheim

WEDNESDAY

OEREK ROROEAUX BAND 8 p.m., free. Original Mikes, 100 S. Main St., Santa Ana. (714) 550-7764; originalmikes.com

ENCORE. presented by Manifest Recordings. 8 p.m., $5. Que Sera, 1923 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 599-6170; queseralb.wix.com

KITSCH OUT THE JAMS 9 p.m., free. Kitsch Bar, 891 Baker St. Ste. A10, Costa Mesa. (714) 546-8580; kitschbar.com

MODERN DISCO AMBASSADORS. 10 p.m., $5. La Cave, 1695 Irvine Ave., Costa Mesa. (949) 646-7944, lacavenrestaurant.com

STEPHEN STILLS & JUDY COLLINS: 8 p.m., $100. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano. (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com.

THURSDAY, OCT. 26

BACK CATALOG 9 p.m., free. Kitsch Bar, 891 Baker St. Ste. A10, Costa Mesa. (714) 546-8580; kitschbar.com.

DOUG LACY ON THE PIANO 6 p.m., free. Ralph Brennan's Jazz Kitchen, 1590 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim. (714) 776-5200; rhjazzkitchen.com

LIVE JAZZ AND R&B 7 p.m., free. The Durban Room at Mozambique, 1740 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-7777; mozambiquenc.com.

REGGAE THURSDAYS. 9 p.m., $5. Que Sera, 1923 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 599-6170; queseralb.wix.com

STEPHEN STILLS & JUDY COLLINS: 8 p.m., $100. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano. (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com.

THE DARDEN SISTERS BAND 7:30 p.m. $12.50-$25. Mackenthelr Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton. (714) 738-6595; themuck.org

UPCOMING

OCTOBER

AMERICA: Oct. 27-28. The Coach House

OINGO BOINGO HALLOWEEN DANCE PARTY: Oct. 29. The Coach House

NOVEMBER

NEGOTORREATHE: Nov. 3. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk.

HALSEY: Nov. 4. Honda Center

THESE HANOSOME DEVILS: Nov. 4. Gaslamp Restaurant & Bar

THE UNTOUCHABLES: Nov. 4. Holiday

THE PETTYBREAKERS, BOYS OF SUMMER. Nov. 11. Gaslamp Restaurant & Bar

TIMEFLIES: Nov. 12. The Observatory

ELBOW: Nov. 14. The Observatory

IMAGINE ORAGONS: Nov. 16. Honda Center

BLUESTRAVELER: Nov. 16. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk.

SHOUT OUT LOUDS: Nov. 18. Constellation Room at the Observatory

THE EVERLY BROTHERS EXPERIENCE: Nov. 24. The Coach House.

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UPCOMING SEX EDUCATION EVENTS

THUBS. NOV. 2ND @ 7:15PM

BDSM 101: LIGHT BONDAGE AND SPANKING

Are you intrigued by BDSM play but don't know how to get started with your partner? This workshop is geared towards beginners who wish to explore the erotic options of light BDSM play in a fun, sexy, and safe way. We will cover how to get started, safety and communication as well as introduce you to some basic toys and bondage items that you can use to enhance your play as well as tips and techniques to create the best experiences. $15 per person or $25 per couple when prepaid by 11/1/17. $25 per person at the door, if space is available.

THUBS. NOV. 16TH @ 7:15PM

BUTT BASICS: PLEASURABLE ANAL PLAY FOR MEN & WOMEN

Anal play can be extremely pleasurable when done correctly. But, there are many common mistakes people make when trying anal play at home that can cause pain or discomfort instead of pleasure. We will learn how to have the best experiences focusing on the pleasure of both partners while playing safely. We will cover anal sex as well as anal toys and prostate play.

Tickets are $15 per person or $25 per couple when prepaid by 11/15/17. If space is available, tickets will be $25 per person at the door.

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Parental Controls

My only child is 16 years old. He was curious about sex from a very young age and very open with me, so his interest in sexual matters gave me ample opportunity to talk with him about safety and consent. He went through a cross-dressing phase when he was small—mostly wanting to wear nail polish and try on mascara—and I felt as if I navigated those waters pretty well, but his father made attempts to squelch those impulses. (He and I are divorced. He has since remarried and is less involved.) That's the background. I've always accepted that he is who he is and done my best to help guide and educate him. Then last year, I caught him trying to shoplift a pair of panties. I'm not the sort of mom who freaks out, but I made him pat them back and talked to him about his actions. When I asked him why he stole them, he refused to tell me. I asked "Did you want them to masturbate with? Did you want to wear them?" He said he wanted to try them on. I told him that if he wanted to explore, he needed to do that with a legal purchase and in the privacy of his own room. Today I found a girl's bra in the laundry. He says he doesn't know whose it is or how it got there, but this isn't my first rodeo. What on earth do I do? If I send him to a therapist and this is about being trans or cross-dressing tendencies, I'm afraid that will shame him. However, this is now something of a criminal/ethical concern, and I want to nip that in the bud. He is in every way a wonderful human: kind, smart, hotny, athletic, no drugs. Is this just the same kid who has always been curious about sex? Or are these warning signs of some sort of sexual deviance? Please help.

Mom in Sleepy South Carolina Lovingly Educates Offspring

Take a deep breath, MISSCLEO, or take two—take however many you need until you're back in touch with your inner mom, the one who doesn't freak out.

Your son may be a cross-dresser, or he may be trans, or he may find bras and panties titillating because women wear them and he wants to sleep with women (not be one). (Lots of gay boys are titillated by jockstraps—but a closeted gay boy can collect 'em all without freaking out his mom.) We can't know whether your son is a cross-dresser, trans or merely titillated, MISSCLEO, but he's clearly exploring and wants to do so privately. So while he *could* go to his mom and ask for a pair of panties and let her know exactly how he intends to use them, he doesn't *want* to ask his mom for a pair of panties or share his uses for them with his mom. He knows you've always accepted him for who he is (but a reminder never hurts), so if this is about his gender identity, well, you'll have to trust that he'll share that with you when he's ready. But if this is about a kink, he may never share that info with you because why on earth would he? Kinks are for sharing with lovers, not mothers.

Give your son some space, including the space to make his own mistakes. As teenage misbehavior goes, swiping a single pair of panties isn't exactly a crime spree. If you suspect he snuck into the girls locker room and made off with a bra (there has to be an easier way for a guy to get his hands on a bra!), you'll want to address that with him—not the "Why do you want a bra?" part, but the risk of getting caught, suspended, expelled or worse. There are too many prosecutors out there looking for excuses to slap the "sex offender" label on teenagers—especially in the Bible Belt.

My hunch is you don't have a sex offender on your hands or a kid drifting into organized crime. You have a slightly pervy teenage boy who is curious about sex and who may like millions of other man-have a thing for women's underg arments. You should emphasize the Not Okay-nass of shoplifting panties from stores or stealing bras from classmates (or the siblings of friends or Laundromats or thrift stores) and the possible consequences should he get caught—theft charges, suspension/expulsion, losing friends, coming into the sights of a sex-negative prosecutor (Seriously: A man like Harvey Weinstein gets away with assaulting women for decades, but prosecutors across the country am throwing the book at teenagers who got caught sharing pics they took of themselves with their BFs/GFs/NBFs.) But otherwise, MISSCLEO, I'm going to advise you to back the fuck off. Your son knows you love him, he knows he can talk to you about anything, and he'll confide in you if and when he is ready—if, again, this is something he needs to discuss with you at all.

My father passed away suddenly. I had a very idyllic childhood and was close to my father and my mother (who is also deceased). Upon sorting through my father's stuff after his death, I stumbled upon his erotica collection. If it were just a stash of *Playboys*, I would have thought nothing of it—that's just man being man. However, his collection contained material that was quite disturbing to me, including photos depicting violent sexual acts and fictional erotica books and magazines with themes of incest. Additionally, there were letters from people with whom he was obviously having extramarital affairs, including during the time that I was a child and believed we were a "normal" family. Since discovering this, it has been hard for me to come to terms with it and think of my father in the way that I used to. I can barely stand to look at a photograph of him. I consider myself to be a sex-positive person, and I realize that even parents are entitled to be kinky, but I simply can't get over this. Any suggestions for how to deal with what I'm feeling and how to try to get past it?

Parent's Aroused Really Ended Nice Thoughts

Sex-positive, huh? Could've fooled me.

Your dad was a kinky motherfucker—you know that now—and if you've been reading Savage Love for a while, you'll know that lots of people are kinky and, distressingly, lots of people out there "enjoy" incest porn. "Of the top hundred searches by men on Pornhub," Seth Stephens-Davidowitz writes in his book *Everybody Lies: Big Data, New Data, and What the Internet Can Tell Us About Who We Really Are*, "16 are looking for incest-themed videos." And it's not just men. "Nine of the top hundred searches on Pornhub by women are for incest-themed videos." That's cold comfort, I realize, and it doesn't make it any less squicky, but your dad's tastes weren't as freakish as you thought and/or hoped.

As for his affairs, your happy childhood and your suddenly conflicted feelings:

Your mother isn't with us, PARENT, so you can't ask her what her arrangement was with your father. But it's unlikely you would have had such an idyllic childhood if your parents' marriage was contentious and your mom was miserable about your dad's cheating and his kinks. It seems likely your mom didn't have a problem with your dad's sexual interests or she tolerated them or—and I hope you're sitting down—she was an active and happy participant. (Kinky women weren't invented in a lab in San Francisco in 2008.) If your mom didn't have a problem with your dad's kinks (which she had to have known about) or his affairs (which she might not have known about), I don't see why they should be a problem for you.

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com), Dan chats with the creator of a naughty, naughty game. Contact Dan via email at mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter (@fakedansavage) and visit ITMFA.org.

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BEST TREND

SMOKING WEED

With the legalization of marijuana, Orange County is flooded with first-time weed smokers. Every kickback or party you go to now, there's always the people giddy about trying weed for the first time when you've already gone through two drug addictions. You can smell the devil's lettuce everywhere from the San Clemente Pier to the hiking trails on Coyote Hills, and it's usually smiling, middle-aged white people walking back to their cars. But it's all love from the smoking community. More smokers means more weed to get smoked out with and less bullshit to deal with when you're just trying to relax. So roll your blunts on an *OC Weekly*, support PotPlus and don't forget to read the paper that covered cannabis before it was cool!

READERS' CHOICE: CRAFT BEER

BEST PREROLLS

LOWELL HERB CO.

Prerolls have a bad rep for being schwag weed. The flower inside is often dry, harsh and doesn't taste right. Lowell Herb Co., however, has raised the bar. As with a pack of cigarettes, you can buy a pack of Lowell Smokes—10 premium prerolled joints. The flower inside isn't shake, either. Each one is 0.6 grams of ground-up, pesticide-free nugs, making for a high-quality experience.

www.lowellsmokes.com

READERS' CHOICE: FATTY'S BOSIE ROLL

BEST CBD PRODUCT

SPEAKEASY CBD

It all started with a man from West Virginia and his fascination with the cannabis plant and the science behind it. Speakeasy 710 founder Josh Hartsel wanted to create a product that he would want, and now he has produced several of them, including these full-spectrum CBD softgel caps. Because Speakeasy places the medicinal value above all, it uses a third party to test its products, meaning you won't find any pesticides, neurotoxins or other harmful chemicals. In fact, each 15 milligram capsule is infused with hemp seed oil, made with the finest extract and using

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OC WEEKLY BEST OF READERS' CHOICE WINNER 2017

Cannabis

Congratulations to the winners of the 2017 Best Of Readers' Poll

The following winners have been voted the best in the Cannabis category.

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weedmaps.com/dispensaries/cookies-oc

Best Cannabis Attorney
CHRISTOPHER GLEW
714 648 0004
1851 E First St #840, Santa Ana
glewkimlaw.com

Best Cannabis Delivery Service
ORGAHIC OC
organicoc.org

Best Cannabis Event
HIGH TIMES CAHHABIS CUP
cannabiscup.com

Best Cannabis Road Trip
HUMBOLOT COUHTY
humboldtgov.org

Best CBD Product
PALAOIH CBO
paladincbd.com

Best Collective
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showgrow.com

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www.speakeasycbd.com

READERS' CHOICE: PALADIN CBD

BEST CANNABIS LAWYER

CHRIS GLEW

This category remains a crowded field. On the one hand, there are activist attorneys such as Matthew Pappas, a constitutional-law expert who has stamped his name on some of the most important and controversial cannabis cases to hit Orange County in the past several years. On the other end of the spectrum is Aaron Herzberg, whose innovative practice specializes in pot-related real-estate acquisitions through his investment company, CalCann Holdings Inc. (Herzberg has also fashioned himself as a cannabis-policy expert via frequent quotations in *Orange County Register* articles.) Meanwhile, both behind-the-scenes and in the courtroom is Christopher Glew. A veteran courtroom advocate with a booming voice to match, Glew's passion for defending his clients' legal rights is matched only by his expertise in advising them on how to avoid ending up in the courtroom in the first place—which is exactly why Glew remains the most trustworthy source of information on the rapidly evolving landscape in California medical- and recreational-cannabis law.

1851 E. First St., Ste. 840, Santa Ana, (714) 648-0004, www.glewkimlaw.com

READERS' CHOICE: CHRIS GLEW

BEST HYDROPONICS SYSTEM

SUPERCLOSET

Things have changed in the cannabis industry, and the days of secretly attempting to grow bud in your closet are over. SuperCloset, also known as SuperPonics, is the leading manufacturer of automated grow systems and boxes. But let's talk about its best one: the 24-site bubble-flow bucket-grow system, which uses combined technology for better yield and a more effective process. The recirculating ebb-and-flow upwelling feature allows for consistent PH and TDS readings, as well as an even nutrient distribution throughout each individual bucket. SuperPonics created what it likes to call a "root Jacuzzi" in each bucket by adding an air stone, which is intended to hyper-oxygenate the water, resulting in a faster harvest. The finishing touch is the rushing-river effect in each bucket as the water fills and drains to and from the reservoir, creating constant circulation throughout the entire system. The end result: quick, top-shelf flower.

supercloset.com

READERS' CHOICE: GLOELAB

BEST VAPE PEN

BRASS KNUCKLES

Vape pens are all over the world nowadays, but only one sets the gold standard—literally. Brass Knuckles Vape Pen is a beautifully designed, Art Deco-styled beaut using only the best cannabis oils. It comes in 16 strains, including Abracadabra, which is CBD-only for those seeking relief without the hallucinogenic. Among the investors is rap artist XZIBIT, who says the company is named Brass Knuckles because "it's going to knock you the fuck out!" Truth in advertising!

Instagram @brassknucklesog

READERS' CHOICE: SPEAKEASY 710

BEST LIVE RESIN

WYLDEHEART MEDICINALS

The rustic packaging initially grabs your attention, but after a dab of Gorilla Glue live resin, it's obvious the cute container it came in is just for looks. Wyldeheart's concentrates are produced with flower from its own farms. It strives to provide patients with resin that offers maximum relief from a company they can trust. Though the extraction method is solvent-free, Wyldeheart claims to have mastered a process that captures all the benefits of the plant. The "off-grid" community is committed to the education and practice of a regenerative lifestyle, explaining the heavy potency and delicious flavor you get with each hit that fills your mouth and blows your mind.

www.facebook.com/nexusalchemy

READERS' CHOICE: LOS ANGELES DISTILLERY

BEST OF 2017

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WWW.4THSTREETMEDICAL.COM

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BEST MOON ROCKS

THE REAL KURUPT'S MOONROCK

Don't be jealous of the bomb-ass hud rappers smoke in the music videos and on television. The Real Kurupt's MoonRock put moon rocks on the map. Composed of indoor OG Kush and a 96 percent THC clear oil that's massaged into the flower, then rolled in OG Kush Kief, you get a super-faded feeling. These rocks are made only from the highest quality products, and though they're the company's flagship, Kurupt and his team take things up a notch by making strawberry, OG, banana, and Henney- and honey-flavored prerolls out of their rock—HWUT?

kuruptsmoonrock.com

READERS' CHOICE: THE REAL KURUPT'S MOONROCK

BEST SHATTER

VAOER EXTRACTS

All *Star Wars* jokes aside, Vader Extracts makes potent concentrates out of its Cannabis Cup-winning flower, including a shatter that sets itself apart from others because of its purity, flavor and BHO extraction process. And Vader helps out the community, with fund-raisers and cannabis product and merchandise donations to patients, families and children in need.

Instagram: @vaderextracts

READERS' CHOICE: FLIGHT BRANDS

BEST CANNABIS ROAD TRIP

HEARST CASTLE

Getting stoned is easy. But getting stoned and having the time of your life requires two things: adventure and nature. What better way to achieve both than road-tripping up the California coast to Hearst Castle? From zebras, horses, llamas and goats that run wild on the estate's pastures to a European-style castle/home-turned-museum that sits upon a bluff called "Enchanted Hill," there's a hell of a lot to get lost in. Obviously DON'T make this drive stoned. But we do recommend eating a low-dose edible (20 milligrams of THC max!) about 15 minutes out, so you're nice and toasty by the time you arrive. As we always say, there's no better tripping than road tripping— especially when the plan is having an elevated experience at Hearst Castle.

750 Hearst Castle Rd., San Simeon, (800) 444-4445, hearstcastle.org

READERS' CHOICE: BOMBOLOT COBBY

BEST EDIBLE BRAND

CANNOESCENT

Cannabis branding can be tricky. Just because the packaging exudes sophistication and glamour doesn't mean the product inside is good. And we don't mean "good" as in stuff that'll get you high, we mean good as in marijuana that's pesticide-free and consistent. That's what makes Canndescent such a stellar company. The brand not only looks chic as hell, but the cannabis is also exceptionally clean, so you know how the flower will make you feel. If you start smoking Canndescent flower and later go back to smoking cannabis that isn't clean, you'll instantly notice the difference—and realize that most cannabis isn't clean. What also separates Canndescent from the rest is its philosophy of curating your experience. Instead of choosing the strain you want to smoke, you choose the effect you want the cannabis to give you. Calm, cruise, creative, connect and charge—a range of indicas, hybrids and sativas. Having the freedom to choose how you want your high to feel is what the company refers to as "the art of the flower."

www.canndescent.com

READERS' CHOICE: PUNCH EDIBLES

BEST EDIBLE

OÉFONCÉ CHOCOLATIER

Culinary practices have progressed to the point that cannabis-infused cuisine is just as good—if not better—than non-medicated foods. Whether you're eating infused candy, medicated pasta or herbal pastries, many edibles don't taste like cannabis anymore (which is both fantastic and horrifying). Défoncé Chocolatier is not only the best medicated chocolate around, but it's also easily in the top five chocolates you'll ever eat (you heard right, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups). It has the rich character-

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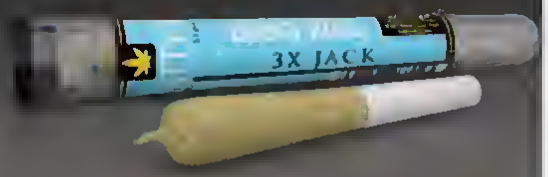

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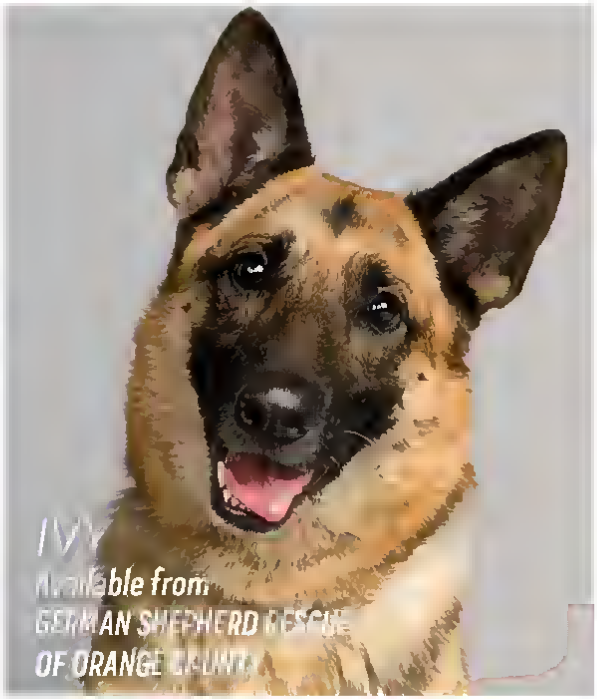

istics of quality artisan chocolate, comes in a dozen flavors and leaves no trace of cannabis on the taste buds. That's saying something for a bar that holds 180 milligrams of THC! The company uses sustainable, responsibly sourced ingredients, too, and the packaging makes it look as if the chocolates could be sold at Whole Foods.

defonce.com

READERS' CHOICE: MISS MARY JANE'S EDIBLES

BEST PATIENT APPRECIATION DAY COLLECTIVE

BUD & BLOOM

Patient appreciation days are the best because it gives patients the opportunity to meet the people behind their favorite products, try samples and get to know their cannabis community. The layout of Bud & Bloom's chic showroom makes it easy to move around and socialize on such occasions. But what makes it different from its rivals is it's generally focused on cannabis education—something the public needs more of. Bud & Bloom also has vendors from the top trending cannabis companies come in to keep its stock relevant.

1327 E. St. Gertrude Place, Santa Ana, (714) 571-2150, budandbloomoc.com

READERS' CHOICE: PEOPLE'S OC

BEST MEDICATED DRINK

HABIT SPARKLING BEVERAGES

The idea of infused drinks are far scarier than the reality. The truth is medicated libations are arguably the best way to get high. They don't make you cough, the high feels as if you have buoyant cloud fluff strapped to your feet, and you can use them creatively. Habit makes the best medicated beverages because it not only offers an array of flavors, but it also uses healthy ingredients—and you can't taste the cannabis. You can mix a Habit beverage into a smoothie, pour the concoction

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into ice trays and make medicated ice cubes, or you can get really wild and use it as a cocktail mixer for a cross fade. Just remember that, as with an edible, it takes about an hour or more to feel the effects, so start slow!

www.habitcrafted.com.

READERS' CHOICE: SPOIG

BEST COLLECTIVE

420 CENTRAL

A lot of cannabis companies and dispensaries are adult-use-oriented operating under the guise of medical cannabis. Then there's 420 Central, a dispensary that has almost gone overboard in its effort to remain true to providing real medical cannabis to patients. If you're looking for tinctures that are doctor-approved for treating epilepsy, 420 Central carries them. If you're looking for a support and cannabis-oil-education group, 420 Central hosts one. If you're looking for a dispensary that sells tested and trusted clean products, 420 Central offers an impressive collection. Although tons of dispensaries are hopping on the adult-use wagon, 420 Central plans to dig even deeper into the medical side.

420central.org

READERS' CHOICE: SHOWGROW

BEST MUNCHIES EATERY

TACO BELL

Because nothing else explains Taco Bell's astounding success other than the legalization and acceptance of the *mota*.

Various locations; www.tacobell.com.

READERS' CHOICE: IN-N-OUT

BEST HYDROPONICS SHOP

LA HABRA HYDROPONICS

Whether you're growing your own cannabis or nurturing a hydro-vegetable garden, La Habra Hydroponics has what you need. The employees are stellar at pinpointing and providing equipment solutions to customers who come in with questions or issues. They're also great at guiding horticultural novices through the beginning stages of growing. This commitment to education is why it's the sweetheart of the local hydroponic stores. And if La Habra Hydroponics doesn't have a part, the staff will order it. If some equipment doesn't work properly, you can return or exchange it. The customer service here is unrivaled, making it easy to come back time after time for your growing needs.

1301 S. Beach Blvd., Ste. O, La Habra, (562) 947-8383; www.lahabrahydroponics.com

READERS' CHOICE: ORANGE COUNTY HYDROPONICS & ORGANICS

BEST STRAIN

GREEN RIBBON

This 19 percent to 24 percent indica strain is an anti-anxiety dream. Its picturesque crystals are breathtaking, and when Green Ribbon is sitting among other strains, the trichomes glisten as if the flower were rolled in glitter. Its orange hairs are meticulously woven and defined between the leaves. The aroma is strong, offering deep tones of dark berries, black currants and hints of anise, all wrapped in earthy greenness. The complexities of its scent could easily pass for a perfume. Green Ribbon is hard to find in Orange County because once it's here, it's gone in a snap. BudBud, a flower company from Venice Beach, grows some of the best Green Ribbon currently on the market. The Green Goddess Collective almost always has some available. Santa Ana's Bud & Bloom sometimes carries straight Green Ribbon, too, but usually, it sells Fruity Pebbles, a Green Ribbon hybrid. If you're looking for a smooth nighttime treat that'll cradle you into a blissful, relaxed sleep, Green Ribbon will become an instant comrade.

READERS' CHOICE: RAMELESS GENETICS WATERMELON

BEST EVALUATION CENTER

4TH STREET MEDICAL CENTER

It's hard to find a place to get your doctor's recommendation that doesn't feel sketchy. Whether the entrance to the evaluation room is in a weird alleyway, the "doctor" seems loony tunes (or the doctor is not there at all, and you're face-timing over a computer with one instead), or you have people hustling you in the door, eager to rip you off—getting your medical-cannabis recom-

THE MODERN-DAY GREAT GATSBY OF CANNABIS

We all know the pothead stereotype: Lazy, jobless couch blobs who sit around munching on potato chips all day. Cannabis Social, Southern California's luxury cannabis events company, is hammering the nail in the stigma coffin. Describing their parties as luxurious doesn't do them proper justice, however. They're the modern day Great Gatsbys of cannabis, throwing opulent gatherings for those who fancy tuxedos, glamorous evening gowns and the elegant consumption of herbal refreshments.

What makes their events unique is that they're curated for the high-end individual—regardless of whether you consume cannabis. You can expect to mingle among top business executives, celebrities, lawyers, politicians and industry influencers, while sipping on champagne and savoring delectable bites crafted by former Nobu chef, Ray Agishi. You can also anticipate medicated everything, of course. From infused food to cocktails to samples provided by vendors—it's safe to assume you'll need an Uber at the end of the night. Yet, because Cannabis Social events are also inclusive to those who don't consume cannabis, there are just as many non-infused food and drink options.

"I think there are a lot of people who want to get into the industry but maybe don't really feel comfortable going to some of the other events that are happening," says Heather Jane, Cannabis Social CEO. "We want our events to be an ambiance for all high-end professionals, whether they're looking to get into the industry or already are. It shows a different, yet very existent, side of cannabis that appeals to a new group of people."

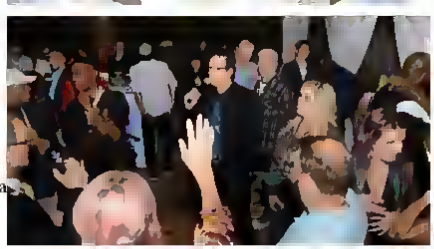
Cannabis Social is the leader in the luxury cannabis event space. But they're doing more than just throwing red-carpet parties that deteriorate the stigma. Heather Jane and her team are also giving a new face to cannabis activism.

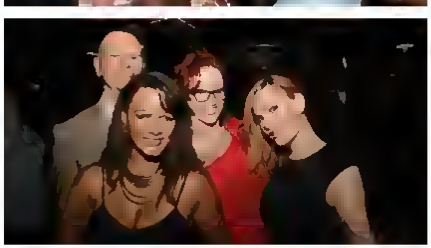
"You don't have to fight and argue to get your point across," she says. "There doesn't always have to be turmoil. You get your point across by being educated and providing a platform for politicians, law-makers and consumers to speak in an environment they're comfortable in."

Heather Jane is also making several other big moves in the cannabis industry. She currently serves as President of Capital Markets for KYCAL which is a top tier consulting firm in the Cannabis space. Heather Jane is also Managing partner to the hottest luxury cannabis culinary products line Sensi Chef with Celebrity Chef Ray Agishi. One of her passions is serving as the social chair on the board CLAB, a powerful organization filled with the movers and shakers of the cannabis industry looking to bring education to the forefront. "We promote the recreational and medicinal use of cannabis for adults over the age of 21," she says. "It's very important to us."

The next event is set for early November at a private venue in Hollywood. It's a 10-course meal prepared by Chef Agishi offering THC and CBD infused options. But non-medicated plates will also be available. Because Cannabis Social events are private, the only way to get in is by sending an inquiry via their website (thecannabissocial.com) or Instagram (@thecannabissocial) with the subject line "Sensi Chef Dinner." From there you'll get the deets on how to procure your ticket to the next elaborate cannabis extravaganza.

BRAND STORY





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READERS' CHOICE: 4TH STREET MEDICAL

BEST PLACE TO GET LIT

A CONCERT

It's an oasis for pot smokers, with almost everybody sparking blunts and hitting pipes once the headliners take the stage. Although weed is usually confiscated at the entrance, concertgoers somehow always manage to sneak it in (*cochinos*), and security always seems more occupied with drunk macho fuckheads. While not as beautiful as hitting a bong as you watch the sun go down at the beach, getting to dance with a lit joint in your mouth to your favorite music without worring about getting kicked out or thrown in handcuffs is the way things should be.

READERS' CHOICE: THE BEACH

BEST CANNABIS-DELIVERY SERVICE

THE MINT LEAF

It's ludicrous that cannabis delivery services are outlawed. How can you expect someone who's bedridden to drive as much as an hour to get medication? Thankfully, as with most things in the industry, being outlawed hasn't stopped delivery services from operating. The Mint Leaf has one of the largest menus—at least 60 strains, with more than 70 edible options and a selection of tinctures, plus tons of topicals, wax and prerolls, and everything is lab-tested. The knowledgeable staff beats a lot of the local budtenders in terms of calculated recommendations and understanding how cannabis works with the body. The Mint Leaf is also one of the only ways South County folks can get cannabis without having to drive to SanTana—light up THAT!

(949) 257-8544, www.themintleaf.org

READERS' CHOICE: ORGANIC OC

BEST SMOKE SHOP

SMOKEEZ SMOKE SHOP

It has a wide product range, a dope glass collection and three locations to serve your smoking needs at a fair price. Smokeez boasts an inventory of pipes that's roughly 85 percent American-blown glass and carries the latest and greatest smoking apparatus (check out the Helix). Mellow music (probably Rebelution Radio on Pandora) plays quietly as you browse. Only negative? If your smoke of choice is a *frajo*, tough luck. On the back wall are vape products and even CBD cartridges, but no cigarettes.

2301 17th St., Santa Ana, (714) 617-5890, also at 210 Adams Ave., Ste. 1, Huntington Beach, (714) 374-0420 and 6000 W. Coast Hwy., Newport Beach (949) 642-0420. Instagram: @smokeezsmokeshop

READERS' CHOICE: LIGHT IT UP SMOKE SHOP

BEST OF 2017

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BEST NUTRIENTS

DR. EARTH

It's disheartening to know that most of the nutrient companies—even the "organic" ones—are owned by Scotts Miracle-Gro, a company that has had a partnership with Monsanto for more than two decades. GMO, chemical-ridden cannabis is a trend and challenge of the future, which is why using ethical organic-nutrient companies is of massive importance. Dr. Earth's Organic 5 Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Fertilizer is one of the best, most natural nutrients you can add to your hydroponic or soil-grown cannabis (it's recommended to use in soil for best results). The list of ingredients includes ground-up fish bones, feather meal, kelp meal, alfalfa meal, soft rock phosphate, mined potassium sulfate, humic acid, seaweed extract, probiotic champion strains of beneficial soil microbes, and ecto and endo mycorrhizae

drearth.com

READERS' CHOICE: GENERAL HYDROPONICS

BEST CANNABIS EVENT

THE EMERALD EXCHANGE

Here is the antithesis to those big pot festivals that are all about #dablife and getting as lit as possible. Instead, the Emerald Exchange explores the healing aspect of cannabis right outside in

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nature. Always located within the inspiring Great Outdoors, this festival is more hippie than hip-hop and features some of the best cannabrands in the industry

emeraldexchangeca.com

READERS' CHOICE: HIGH TIMES CANNABIS CUP

BEST BUDTENDERS

BLÜM OC

Nothing's worse than going to a dispensary and asking the budtender for a strain that helps reduce anxiety, and they whip out a jar of sativa. At Blüm OC, you don't have to worry about that. Not only do the budtenders know their strains, edibles and topicals, as well as which products are best at healing specific pains and ailments, but they're also wonderful at connecting with patients.

2811 Tech Center Dr., Santa Ana, (949) 238-4203

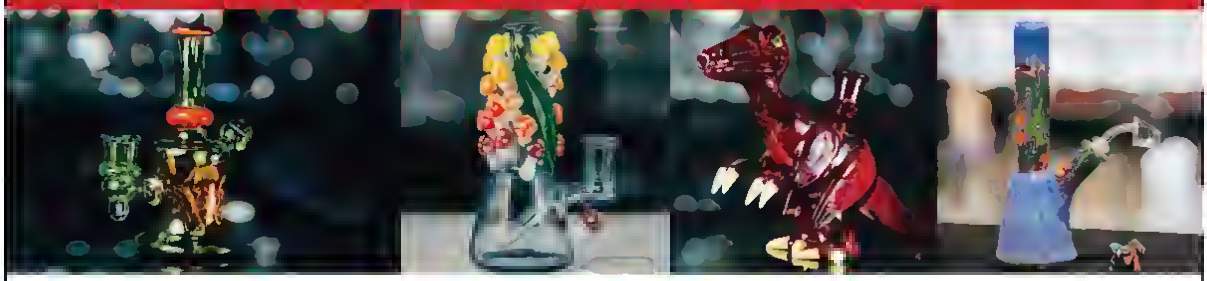
READERS' CHOICE: GOODIES OC

BEST OF 2017

2017 BEST OF Readers' Poll NOMINEE OC WEEKLY

Orange County, Thank You For Nominating Ziggy's

BEST SMOKE SHOP!



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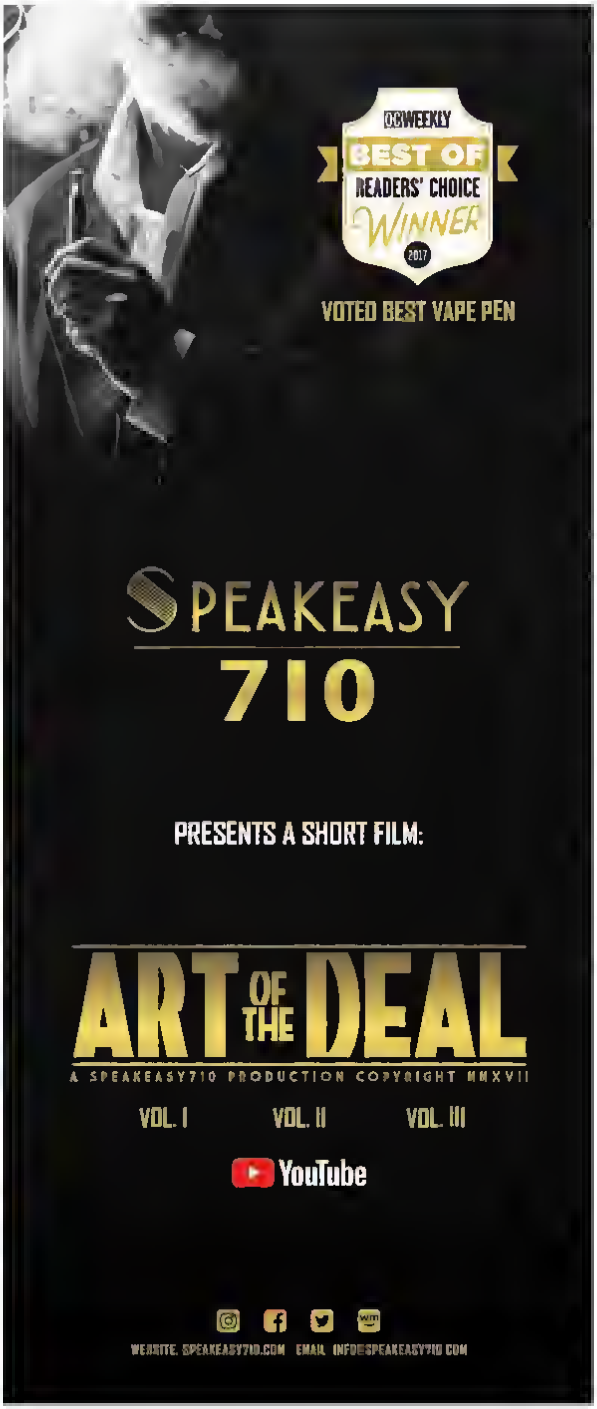

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TOKE OF THE WEEK

» MARY CARREON

EdiPure's Infused Watermelon Tarts

Two weeks ago, Colorado outlawed edible gummy candies in the shape of humans, animals or fruit. Although Denver is 1,014.2 miles away, it seems wise to keep abreast of their cannalaws because what happens over there is likely to be mirrored here. To wit: Now is a good time to stock up on infused gummies because they're likely to become collector's items in 2018.

Making my rounds in Santa Ana last week, I walked into People's OC and spotted its colorful assortment of infused EdiPure gummies. There were yellow lemon drops, watermelon tarts (which look and taste like watermelon Sour Patches), cherry-cola bottles, rocky rope (kind of like a Nerds Rope), apple drops, cherry bombs and sour sea creatures. I felt the juvenile love I have for sour candies brewing in my chakras. I decided to go with old faithful: watermelon tarts.

As far as I'm concerned, they're adult Sour Patch candies, and they're great. Dispensaries won't be the same when they're officially banned, which is inevitable, sadly, because regulators believe they appeal to children. I savored the taste as soon as I bit into the fruity half-moon-shaped candy. The fruit flavor outweighed the plant taste, even though each watermelon candy contains 10 milligrams of THC (the entire bag contains 100 milligrams).

I ate two as soon as I got home from People's OC, and within an hour, I had the sweatiest buzz. I was alert yet relaxed, I felt silly but was able to concentrate on things. I felt sassy, but also too stoned to act on it. I felt simultaneously sour and sweet, exactly the way a Sour Patch kid is supposed to feel.

MCARREON@OCWEEKLY.COM

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Ericsson Inc. Construction Manager Irvine, CA accountable for all Civil Works & financial control on scheduling SF-ASF and Quality Management on assigned projects. Mail resume to Ericsson Inc. 6300 Legacy Dr. B1 L42 Plano, TX 75024 Job # 17-CA-5279

Chiropractor Diagnose & amp; treat musculoskeletal conditions of spine & amp; extremities, including manipulating spine & amp; other extremities. Need D.C degree + valid CA Chiropractic license. Send resume to Nozomi Aral, D.C. 1535 Baker Street Costa Mesa CA 92627

Market Research Analyst. Conduct market research to identify potential markets Reqd: Bachelor's in Bus. Admin., Econ. or related. Mail Resume: Game Cafe Services, Inc. 2452 Dupont Dr., Ste 280, Irvine, CA 92612

IT Project Manager (Tustin, CA) Plan, initiate and manage information technology projects. Bachelor's in Computer/Electronics Engineering required. Resume to: Woongjin, Inc. 333 Centennial Way #200 Tustin CA 92780

Acupuncturist. Apply by mail only to Rai N. Brookhurst St., #117 Anaheim, CA 92801, attn President.

Cost Analyst: Prepare cost est. for comm network const. projects. Req'd: BE/BS in Const. Mgmt., Civil & Env. Engr., or related. Mail resume: KNA Media, Inc. 2513 W Woodland Dr Anaheim, CA 92801

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Pacific Life Insurance Co. has the following job openings. Senior Actuarial Analyst in Aliso Viejo, CA (Ref # 2004RR) Director, ALM Actuary in Aliso Viejo, CA (Ref #2005RR) Actuarial Analyst in Newport Beach, CA (Ref #1964) Send resume to employment<>pacificlife.com referencing, Ref # EOE.

Mechanical Engineer E/T Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Resume to: Bi-Search International Inc. 17750 Gillette Ave. Irvine, CA 92614

Student Advisor: Prvd. full range of student services, e.g., academic advisement & admin services. Req'd: MBA or MA/MS in Organizational Leadership or related. Mail resume: Stanton University 9618 Garden Grove Blvd #201 Garden Grove, CA 92844

Accountant (Orange CA) Prepare exam re & analyze accounting records, financial statements/other financial reports to assess accuracy completeness, and conformance to reporting & procedural standards; Report to management regarding the financial condition of establishment, Establish tables of accounts and assign entries to proper accounts. 40hrs/wk. Bachelor's in Accounting or related reqd. Resume to CYNU Inc. Attn: James Chin, 1700 The City Dr S #8450 Orange CA 92868

Sales Director (Brea CA): Lead & direct sales dept & bus dev to increase Co's presence in electronic security system market. REQ: Bach in Bus Admin/Mktg/related + 2 yrs exp. Mail Resumes to: NUUO US, Inc., Ref #2522, 2657 Saturn St. Brea CA 92821

Market Research Analyst: Collect & analyze mkt data for restaurant bus. Req'd: BA/BS in Bus Admin, Econ, or Mgmt. Sci. Mail resume: Fil Turon Oak Tree Plaza LLC 1716 E 17th St. #102 Tucson, CA 92780

National Sales Director in Newport Beach, CA. Occasional travel within U.S. 1 or 2 times per mo. Please apply in writing to: Black & Peach Retail, LLC Attn: Lori Sandoval 18NSD# 1171 500 Newport Center Drive, Suite 300 Newport Beach, CA 92660

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Transportation Designer (San Clemente, CA) Develop design and evaluate automotive products and design concepts. Bachelor's in Transportation Design. Resume to: Ideation Creation Group Inc. 1007 Calle Sonora, San Clemente, CA 92673

System Integration Analyst (Tustin, CA) Develop, create and modify computer software for efficient system integration and operation. Master's in Info System/Engineering related. Resume to: Woongjin Inc. 333 Centennial Way #200, Tustin, CA 92780

Staff Accountant: Prepare tax returns, provide accounting svcs. Req's BA/BS in accntng, busi admin or mth/CPA. 40hrs/wk. Apply to Hall & Company CPAs an d Consultants Inc. Attn: Megan Barba 111 Pacifica Ste 300 Irvine, CA 92618

Solar PV Designer: Design & manage Solar Photovoltaic Systems. Req'd: BE/BS in Electrical Engr or Nanomaterials Engr. Mail resume: Wogen Solar Inc. 1511 E Orangethorpe Ave #D Fullerton, CA 92831

Pastor: F/T; Nonprofit; Christian church. Conduct pastoral services; Req: Master of Divinity or Related. Resume to: ANAHEIM CHURCH <> 9571 MUIRLANDS BVLD. IRVINE, CA. 92618

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Senior SAP Solution Developer sought by Applied Medical Resources Corporation, a medical device dvlpr & mfr to design/dvlp/responsible for full life cycle implmtn of Web Dynpro/ABAP. Rach's deg in Comp Sci, Mgmt Info Systems or related IT field or related exp. 5 yrs exp. Job Loc: Rancho Santa Margarita, CA. E-mail resume to SAPCAREER@appliedmedical.com

Religious Education Director (Anaheim, CA) Plan, direct and coordinate church education programs and activities. Master's in Education req'd. Resume to: Purely Evangelical Church 2100 W Crescent Ave. #E Anaheim, CA 92801

Pastor: Conduct religious worship & deliver sermons. Master's Degree in Theology, Christian Education, or related req'd. Orange Korean Church Christian Performed 645 W Malvern Ave. Fullerton, CA 92832

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Interested candidates send resume to: Goodrich, Inc., PO Box 26184 San Francisco CA 94126 Attn: A. Johnson. Please reference job # below:

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Sales Representative (Anaheim, CA) Sell heavy duty electrical equipment by negotiating prices and terms. MBA related req'd. Resume to: E-Solution Inc. 4041 E La Palma Ave. #J Anaheim, CA 92807

CH2M Hill, Inc., a Geotechnical Engineer, Santa Ana, CA. Geotechnical engg: include planning & site characterization, design of facilities, & construction inspection. Mail resume to: Shelly Satta, CH2M HILL, 9191 S. Jamaica St. Englewood, CO 80112 Job ID: 17-CA2102

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Senior SAP Solution Developer sought by Applied Medical Resources Corporation, a medical device dvlpr & mfr to design/dvlp/responsible for full life cycle implmtn of Web Dynpro/ABAP. Rach's deg in Comp Sci, Mgmt Info Systems or related IT field or related exp. 5 yrs exp. Job Loc: Rancho Santa Margarita, CA. E-mail resume to SAPCAPEER@appliedmedical.com

Microchip Technology seeks a Other Engr (Code SE-MO) in Lake Forest, CA. Dvlp Microchip's proprietary wireless technology & solutions. Reqs BS+2 yrs rltd exp. Mail resume to Silicon Valley HR 450 Holger Way, San Jose, CA 95134. Reference job title & code.

Computer Systems Engineer (Tustin, CA) Design and develop operational support systems for computer systems. Bachelor's in Computer/Software Engineering related. Resume to: Woongjin Inc. 333 Centennial Way #200, Tustin, CA 92780

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